MOON GIRL

MOON GIRL

and The Prince

NO. 1

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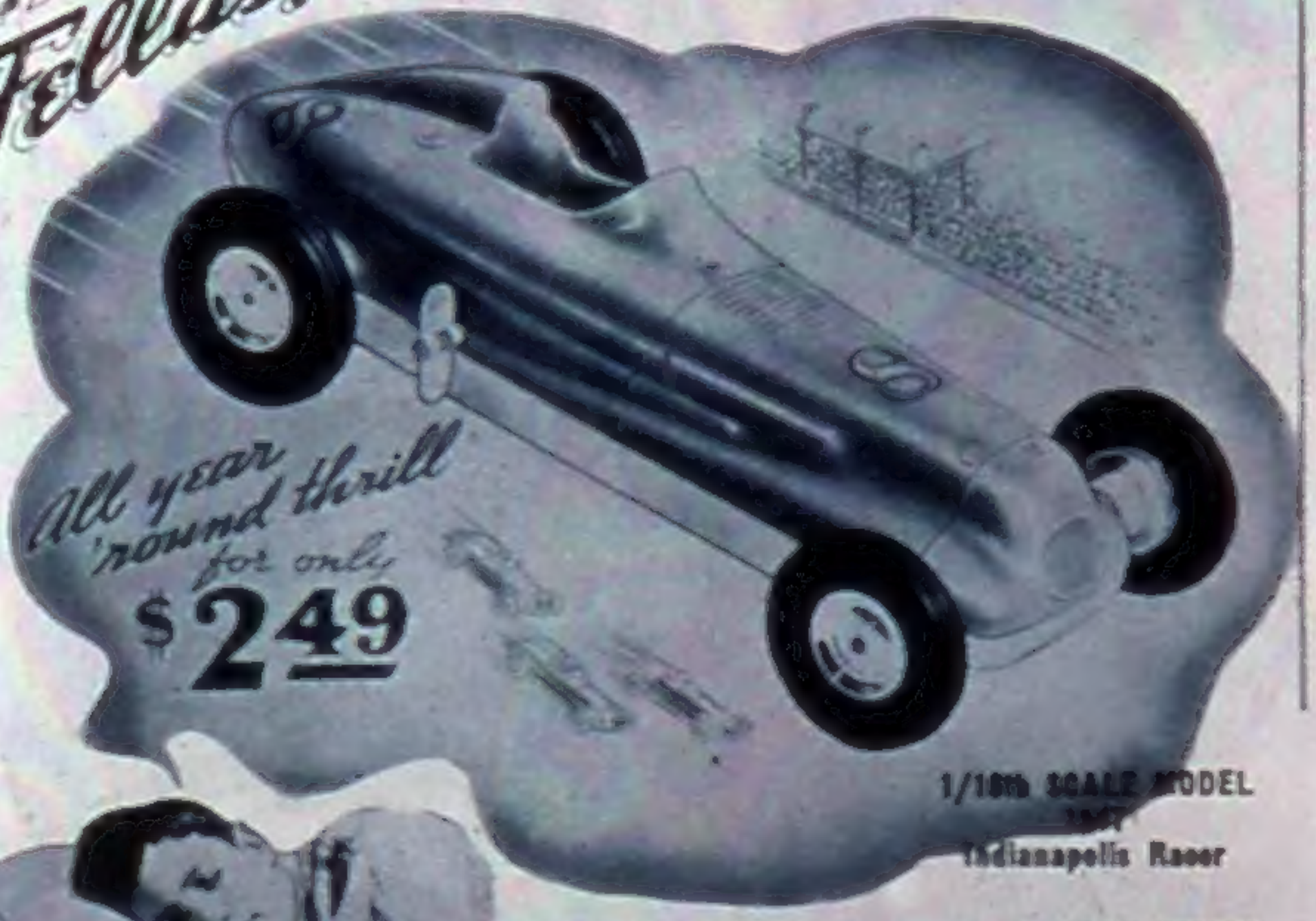

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Introducing

MOON GIRL

and The Prince

JUST ONCE IN EVERY SEVEN HUNDRED YEARS THERE APPEARS ON EARTH A MAN AND A WOMAN, WHOSE CHARACTERISTICS ARE SO OUTSTANDING, SO VIRILE, SO BEYOND OUR CONCEPTION THAT THEY ACTUALLY STAGGER OUR IMAGINATIONS!

FIRST, THERE IS *MOON GIRL*—A WOMAN OF SENSATIONAL STRENGTH, SUPERHUMAN SPEED AND ENDURANCE AND SURPASSING LOVELINESS. HER MAGIC MOONSTONE GIVES HER THE POWER OF TEN ORDINARY MEN AND GUARDS HER AGAINST ALL HARM.

THEN THERE IS *PRINCE NEMU* ONE OF THE GREATEST ATHLETES OF ALL TIME---A TRUE SON OF HERCULES. NO LIVING MAN OR WOMAN CAN MATCH THE PRINCE'S SUPERLATIVE STRENGTH—EXCEPT *MOON GIRL*. TO HER ALONE *PRINCE NEMU* MUST CONCEDE MASTERY (WHEN OF COURSE, SHE USES THE POWER OF HER MAGIC MOONSTONE)

THE LAST APPEARANCE OF SUCH AN OUTSTANDING MAN AND WOMAN WAS DESCRIBED BY MARCO POLO IN HIS ADVENTURES WRITTEN SEVEN HUNDRED YEARS AGO. NOW IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY---IN 1947, IN FACT, SOON A MAN AND WOMAN APPEAR AGAIN!

ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES YOU WILL FIND THE AMAZING STORY OF...

MOON GIRL and The Prince

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

JUST BEFORE THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE STRANGE HISTORY OF *MOON GIRL* AND *THE PRINCE* HAD ITS ORIGIN, IN THE WILD MOUNTAINS OF SAMARKAND

MIGHT AS WELL STOP TRYING! YOU CAN'T SHAKE ME LOOSE!

SHE IS TAMING HIM! I DID NOT BELIEVE ANYONE COULD RIDE THAT WILD ANIMAL!

NO LIVING THING IS A MATCH FOR THE MOON GIRL!

AMONG THE MOON GIRL'S ADMIRERS IS THE HANDSOME PRINCE MENGU...

WHAT A WOMAN! I CAME A THOUSAND MILES TO FIND HER, AND SHE SHALL BE MY WIFE!

WELL DONE, PRINCESS MOON GIRL! HE IS TAME AS A KITTEN NOW.

TAKE HIM TO THE STABLES! I WILL BATHE BEFORE I DINE WITH MY MOTHER, THE QUEEN!

LATER...

THE QUEEN MOTHER WISHES TO SEE YOU IMMEDIATELY, MY PRINCESS! IT IS ABOUT A MOST IMPORTANT MATTER...

WHAT CAN BE THIS URGENT? I'M TO DINE WITH HER IN AN HOUR, ANYWAY!

THE PRINCESS OF THE MOON FINDS THE QUEEN MOTHER IMPATIENTLY WAITING IN HER CHAMBERS...

YOU SEE THAT MAN, DAUGHTER? HE IS PRINCE MENGU! AND HE HAS COME TO ASK FOR YOUR HAND IN MARRIAGE!

MARRIAGE? ...OH, NO!

I DO NOT KNOW THIS MAN!! I CANNOT LOVE HIM...AND HE SHALL NOT BE MY HUSBAND!

THERE IS A TRADITION IN OUR PART OF SAMARKAND, A TRADITION CARRIED DOWN FROM BEFORE THE DAYS OF MARCO POLO — A TRADITION THAT MUST BE SATISFIED BEFORE THE CEREMONY CAN TAKE PLACE...

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

THEN THE QUEEN RELATED THIS STRANGE TALE.....

MANY, MANY YEARS AGO IN THE REIGN OF KING KAIDU, DURING THE 13TH CENTURY, THE CUSTOM BEGAN. KING KAIDU HAD A DAUGHTER, THE VERY FIRST PRINCESS OF THE MOON, AND SHE WAS VERY BEAUTIFUL. SHE WAS SO STRONG AND BRAVE THAT IN ALL HER FATHER'S REALM NO MAN COULD OUTDO HER IN FEATS OF STRENGTH. WHEN THE TIME CAME FOR HER TO MARRY, SHE DID NOT WISH TO BE WED TO A MAN WEAKER THAN HERSELF.

SHE REALLY DESIRED A MAN WHOM SHE COULD ADMIRE, WHOSE STRENGTH AND WISDOM WERE GREATER THAN HER OWN.

SO SHE ARRANGED FOR HER FATHER, KING KAIDU, TO ISSUE A PROCLAMATION. SHE CHALLENGED ANY MAN TO THROW HER IN THE WRESTLING RING, AND TO THE VICTOR, SHE WOULD GIVE HERSELF IN MARRIAGE. THIS PROCLAMATION WAS NO SOONER MADE THAN MANY CAME FROM ALL PARTS TO TRY THEIR FORTUNE. BUT ALL WERE DOOMED TO FAILURE. FOR THE DAUGHTER OF KING KAIDU WAS AS STRONG AS SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL, AND NO MAN WAS HER EQUAL.

AT LAST THERE CAME A MAN, SO PRINCELY IN HIS BEARING, AS LITHE AS A PANTHER IN HIS STRIDE, THAT THE DAUGHTER OF KING KAIDU WAS SMITTEN WITH HIM. THE YOUNG MAN WAS A MOST AGREEABLE CHOICE IN THE EYES OF KING KAIDU ALSO, FOR HE WAS OF ROYAL BLOOD, AND OWNED MANY HORSES AND OTHER FORMS OF WEALTH.

THE YOUNG MAN LOVED THE DAUGHTER OF KING KAIDU WITH HIS WHOLE HEART. WHEN THEY WALKED TOGETHER IN THE GARDEN, SHE KNEW THAT SHE LOVED HIM ALSO.

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

BUT HER PRIDE WOULD NOT PERMIT HER TO YIELD TO A MAN LESS STRONG THAN HERSELF. IN SECRET THOUGH, SHE YEARNED FOR A MOMENT OF SENSIBLE WEAKNESS, SO THAT HE MIGHT OVERCOME HER. IN THE COMBAT WHICH FOLLOWED HE PROVED STRONGER THAN ANY MAN SHE EVER MET BEFORE. YET, AFTER A DESPERATE STRUGGLE, SHE THREW HIM. AND THE YOUNG MAN, BITTER WITH DESPAIR, RODE AWAY. AND THE DAUGHTER OF KING KAIDU WAS LONELY AND SAD!

SOON AFTERWARD, JOHN KAIDU WAS INVOLVED IN A SERIES OF DESPERATE BATTLES AGAINST NEIGHBORING CHIEFS. WHEN HE RODE INTO BATTLE, HIS DAUGHTER RODE BESIDE HIM, AND IN BATTLE SHE DISTINGUISHED HERSELF MORE THAN ANY OTHER WARRIOR. IN ONE OF THESE BATTLES SHE SLEW THE EVIL WIZARD KA-ZHAN, AND FROM HIM SHE TOOK THE MAGIC MOONSTONE. IT WAS A TALISMAN THAT MADE HER INVINCIBLE TO HARM. FROM THE DAY SHE WORE THE MOONSTONE HER STRENGTH SEEMED TO MULTIPLY UNTIL, IT WAS SAID, SHE COULD DEFEAT AN ENTIRE ARMY, SINGLEHANDED. BUT SHE WAS UNHAPPY.

MARCO POLO RECORDS THE REST OF THE STORY. MY DAUGHTER, ONE DAY, IN THE FIELD OF BATTLE, THE DAUGHTER OF KING KAIDU ESPIED A FAMILIAR FIGURE ON HORSEBACK, IN THE MIDST OF THE ENEMY TROOPS. DASHING FORWARD ON THE FULL GALLOP, SHE SNATCHED HIM FROM HIS HORSE, AND BROUGHT HIM BACK WITH HER TO HER OWN PEOPLE. SO THE DAUGHTER OF KING KAIDU FOUND HER TRUE LOVE. ONE MAY SUPPOSE SHE ALSO FOUND HAPPINESS. "BUT WHAT HAS THIS TO DO WITH *ME*?" ASKED THE PRINCESS OF THE MOON.

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

YOU ARE THE DIRECT DESCENDANT OF THE DAUGHTER OF KING KAIDU! IT IS DECREED THAT THE MAN WHO TAKES YOU FOR HIS WIFE MUST FIRST PROVE HIS SUPERIOR STRENGTH!
NO MAN CAN DO THAT!

THEY SAY THIS PRINCE OF MEMBU IS A TRUE SON OF HERCULES! HE HAS UNBELIEVABLE STRENGTH! BUT HE CANNOT DEFEAT YOU IF YOU WEAR THE MAGIC MOONSTONE—
YOU'RE GIVING IT TO ME?

LET NO ONE KNOW ITS POWER! ONCE YOU WEAR THE MOONSTONE, NO MAN WILL BE YOUR MASTER! BUT IT MAY BRING YOU MUCH UNHAPPINESS!
I CHOOSE TO WEAR IT! OH, IT'S MORE BEAUTIFUL THAN I EVER DREAMED!

SO A CONTEST OF STRENGTH WITH PRINCE MEMBU IS ARRANGED AND A PRINCESS OF THE MOON AGAIN CONFRONTS A HANDSOME SUITOR FOR HER HAND...
I'VE COME A LONG DISTANCE TO SEE YOU! YOU WILL RETURN WITH ME AS MY WIFE!
YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO COMMAND ME IN ANYTHING! THAT RIGHT YOU MUST EARN IN A FAIR CONTEST...

I SHALL DEFEAT YOU! FOR IT IS TRUE THAT I AM OF THE BLOOD OF HERCULES! BUT EVEN IF I WERE NOT, LOVE WOULD MAKE ME YOUR MASTER!
LET YOUR DEEDS SPEAK!

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

YOU WIN! I DID NOT EXPECT SUCH STRENGTH IN ONE SO BEAUTIFUL! BUT THERE ARE OTHER CONTESTS...
HE IS HANDSOME --AND CONFIDENT! IT IS ALMOST A SHAME HE MUST LOSE!
AS THE DAY WANES, THE TESTS OF STRENGTH AND AGILITY GO ON. ONE RECORD AFTER ANOTHER IS BROKEN AS THE HANDSOME PRINCE TESTS HIS FAIR OPPONENT'S SKILL TO THE UTMOST, AND THEN THE TIME FOR THE FINAL TEST IS AT HAND...
THIS SHALL DECIDE! YOU SHALL WRESTLE TO A FALL, AND WHOEVER PROVES STRONGER SHALL BE DECLARED THE VICTOR! IS IT AGREED?
YES!
YES!

AND FOR THE FIRST TIME MOON GIRL KNOWS DOUBT, AS AN ENCOUNTER REVEALS THE TREMENDOUS POWER OF HER ANTAGONIST...
HIS ARMS ARE LIKE STEEL! IS IT POSSIBLE I CAN DEFEAT HIM?
THE PRINCE SECURES THE FIRST HOLD. QUICKLY HE FORCES THE PRINCESS OF THE MOON TO HER KNEES...

EVERY TRICK IN HIS REPERTOIRE THE PRINCE TRIES TWICE YET HIS BEAUTIFUL OPPONENT STANDS LIKE A ROCK OF GRANITE AND FINALLY A POWERFUL MANEUVER PINS HIM SECURELY TO THE GROUND
I'VE WON!

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

BUT, STRANGELY, HER TRIUMPH DOES NOT LEAVE THE PRINCESS CONTENT. AND WHEN SHE GOES TO VISIT THE VANQUISHED PRINCE...

HE'S GOING! HE'S LEAVING THE CASTLE...FOREVER!

O MOTHER, I'VE MADE A TERRIBLE MISTAKE! I'VE DRIVEN HIM AWAY AND I-I LOVE HIM...

I WAS AFRAID THIS WOULD HAPPEN!

THE MAGIC MOONSTONE DOES NOT ALWAYS BRING HAPPINESS! YOU ARE FINDING THAT OUT, JUST AS DID THE DAUGHTER OF KAIOU TOO YEARS AGO!

I MUST FIND HIM AGAIN! I SHALL NEVER BE HAPPY WITH ANY OTHER MAN!

GO THEN, MY DAUGHTER! FIND YOUR LOVED ONE! PERHAPS YOU CAN STILL WIN HIM BACK...

O THANK YOU, MOTHER! THANK YOU!

FAR AND WIDE THE PRINCESS OF THE MOON SEARCHES FOR HER BELOVED PRINCE. BUT HE IS NOT TO BE FOUND IN SAMARKAND, NOR IN HIS OWN KINGDOM OF MENGU. MEN SAY THAT DISAPPOINTED IN LOVE, THE YOUNG PRINCE HAS FLED FOREVER THE SCENES OF HIS DEFEAT...

BUT THE PRINCESS NEVER ABANDONS HER SEARCH AND ONE DAY, IN AN AMERICAN CITY...

IT IS HE! I'VE FOUND MY PRINCE AT LAST!

DISAPPOINTED IN LOVE AND SEEKING TO ESCAPE HIS PAST, PRINCE MENGU HAS COME TO AMERICA AND FOUND A POSITION AS ATHLETIC COACH IN A COLLEGE IN A MEDIUM SIZE CITY, UNDER THE NAME OF LIONEL MANNING

WATCH ME! THIS IS THE WAY TO THROW THE SHOTPUT!

I DISAGREE!

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

A GIRL! WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT SHOT-PUTTING?

HE DOESN'T RECOGNIZE ME!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO MATCH YOURSELF AGAINST ME?

THIS IS SILLY! YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO THROW IT TEN FEET!

DON'T BE TOO SURE!

AS ONCE BEFORE SPEARS CLEFT THE AIR, SO NOW SHOTPUTS MARK A TEST OF STRENGTH...

YOU-YOU BEAT ME! ONLY ONE PERSON IN THE WORLD COULD EQUAL THAT THROW! WHY, YOU MUST BE--

THERE MUST BE A PLACE WHERE WE CAN TALK QUIETLY!

LATER...IN A QUIET RESTAURANT...

PRINCESS OF THE MOON! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I WAS SEARCHING FOR YOU! THIS IS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO SAY, BUT I'M NOT SURE I REALLY WON WHAT I DESIRED IN OUR CONTEST... WILL YOU COME BACK TO SAMARKAND WITH ME?

IT IS TOO LATE! I LOVE THIS COUNTRY! I INTEND TO STAY HERE FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE, USING MY STRENGTH ONLY TO FIGHT EVIL...

I WAS HOPING YOU'D SAY THAT - FOR I LOVE MY NEW ADOPTED COUNTRY TOO - AND I'M SURE WE CAN ACCOMPLISH MUCH MORE NOW THAT WE CAN COMBINE FORCES!

AND SO CLARE LUNE (KNOWN TO US AS MOON GIRL) AND LIONEL MANNING (KNOWN TO US AS THE PRINCE) DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO THE TASK OF CREATING A BETTER WORLD! SHEDDING THEIR OLD IDENTITIES, THEY BRAVELY FACE THE FUTURE TOGETHER IN AMERICA, THEIR NEW HOME!

MOON GIRL and The Prince

CLARE LUNE, HISTORY TEACHER AT THE BAWLEY JUNIOR HIGH, ACTUALLY IS THE POSSESSOR OF THE FABLED *MOONSTONE* — WHICH GIVES HER THE SUPER-HUMAN POWERS OF *MOON GIRL!*

ACTING *MOON GIRL* IN HER INCREASING BATTLE AGAINST EVIL IS *JONES*, MANNING A TWIN OF HERCULES, BETTER KNOWN AS *THE PRINCE!*

BOTH *MOON GIRL* AND *THE PRINCE* NEED ALL THEIR POWERS TO WARD OFF THE MOST MENACING VISITORS EARTH HAS EVER KNOWN, *THE INVADERS FROM VENUS!*

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

SECOND PLANET FROM THE SUN VENUS LIES SHROUDED IN JAGGED MASSES OF GASEOUS FOG. SHIELDING THE SURFACE FROM EARTHLY OBSERVERS.

BUT LIFE EXISTS ON VENUS LIFE OF A STRANGE AND SUPERIOR ORDER...

THE ROYAL FAMILY IS READY TO QUEEN. I WANT YOUR FINAL DECISION.

YOU KNOW THE PURPOSE OF THIS VOYAGE AS WELL AS I DO LORCA. BUT LET ME REPEAT IT ONCE MORE FOR YOUR BENEFIT AS AN UNBIASED ONE

HERE ON VENUS WOMEN RULE OUR MEN HAVE BECOME PUNY [illegible] OF US. THE POOR HELPLESS CREATURES DEPEND ON US FOR THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE....

EVEN SO THEY ARE DYING OFF RAPIDLY! SOON THERE WILL BE NO MEN LEFT ALIVE ON VENUS. WHEN THAT DAY COMES WE TOO SHALL BE [illegible]

THAT MUST NEVER HAPPEN QUEEN

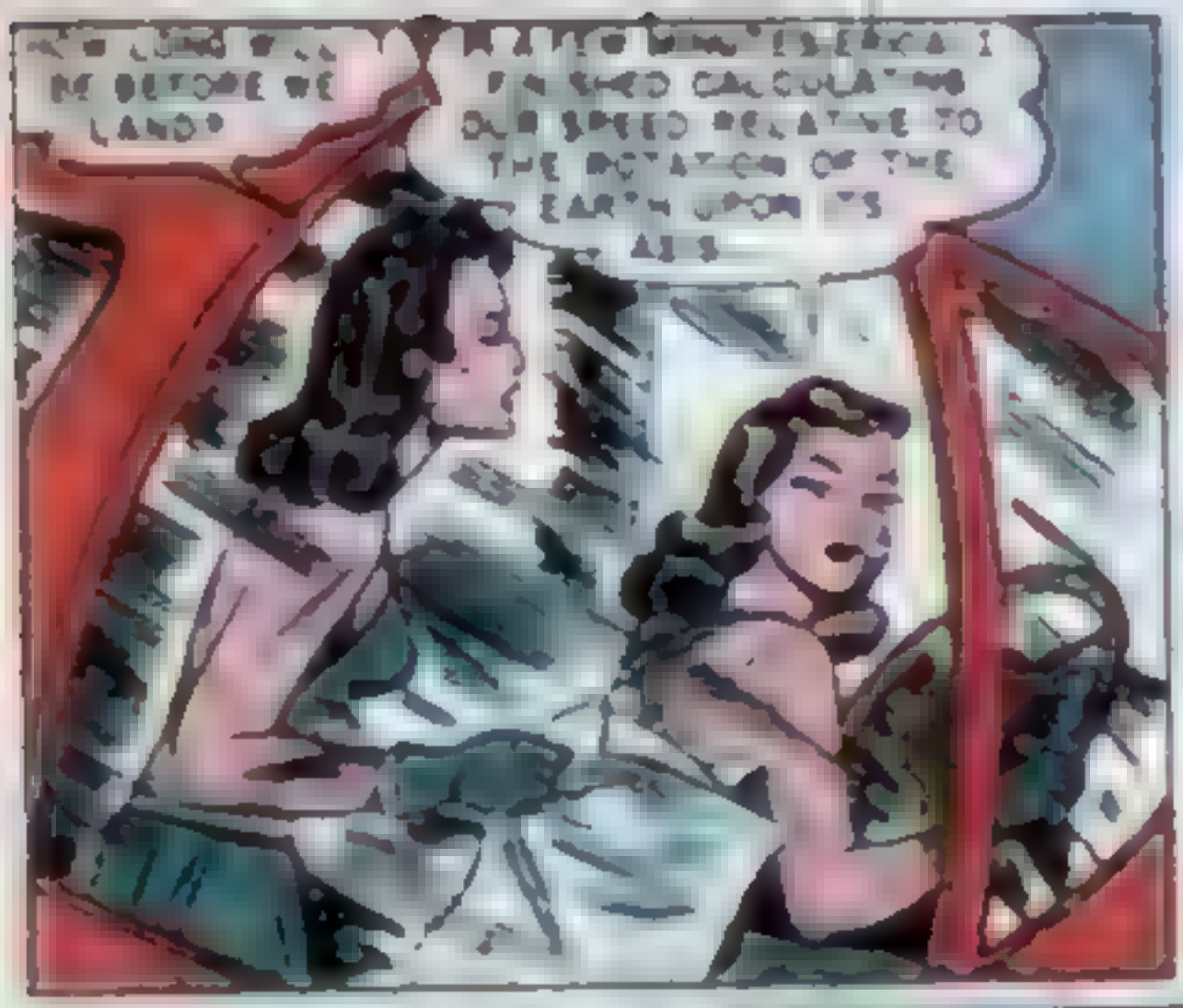
THAT IS WHY I AM SENDING YOU TO THE PLANET EARTH. IN THAT PRIMITIVE SOCIETY, MEN STILL RULE. THEY ARE RUTHLESS CREATURES, NO DOUBT, BUT THEY WILL BE STRONG AND STURDY

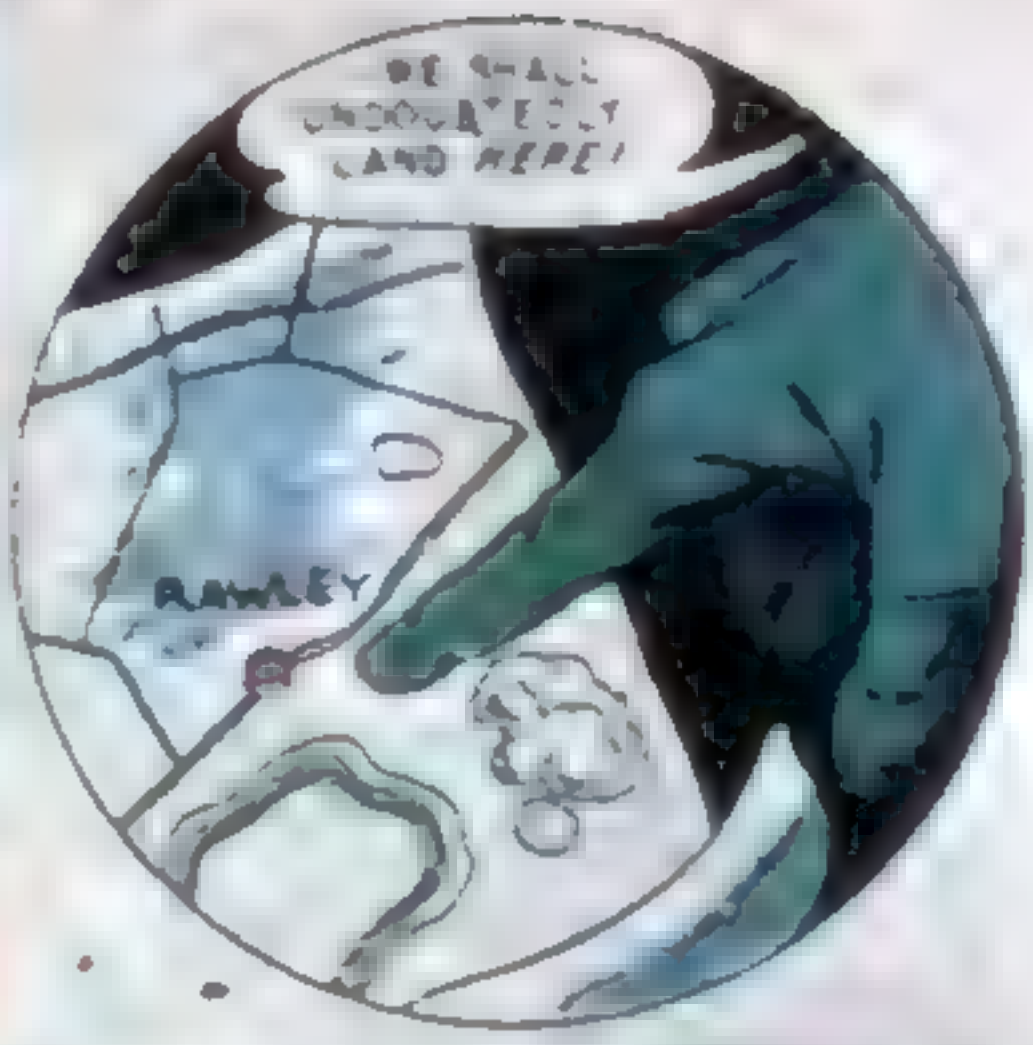
CAPTURE SEVERAL OF THEM AND BRING THEM BACK TO VENUS. THEY SHALL BE COMELY SPECIMENS OF A NEW AND BETTER BREED OF MEN.

DEPEND ON ME O QUEEN. I SHALL NOT FAIL

SO THE INVASION FROM VENUS BEGINS. OUT OF THE GASEOUS MASS [illegible] A ROCKET PROJECTILE ON ITS EPOCHAL JOURNEY THROUGH SPACE....

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE





AT THIS MOMENT NEAR THE SPOT WHERE THE VENUSIAN SPACE SHIP IS DESTINED TO LAND A GAME BETWEEN THE PROFESSORS AND STUDENTS OF STATE COLLEGE IS UNDER WAY
WHAT A ROCKET!

THAT BUS CARRYING FORTY PROFESSORS FROM WAYNE COLLEGE HASN'T SHOWN UP YET & IT'S OVER AN HOUR LATE SOMETHING MUST HAVE HAPPENED
HOW THOSE MEN WOULDN'T WANT TO MISS THE BALL GAME

THE BUS MAY HAVE BROKEN DOWN; OR THEY CAUGHT UP ON A TAKE OVER FOR THE REST OF THE GAME AND EXPLAIN TO MISS LANE SHE'LL BE WAITING FOR ME OUTSIDE THE COLLEGE LIBRARY IN AN HOUR

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

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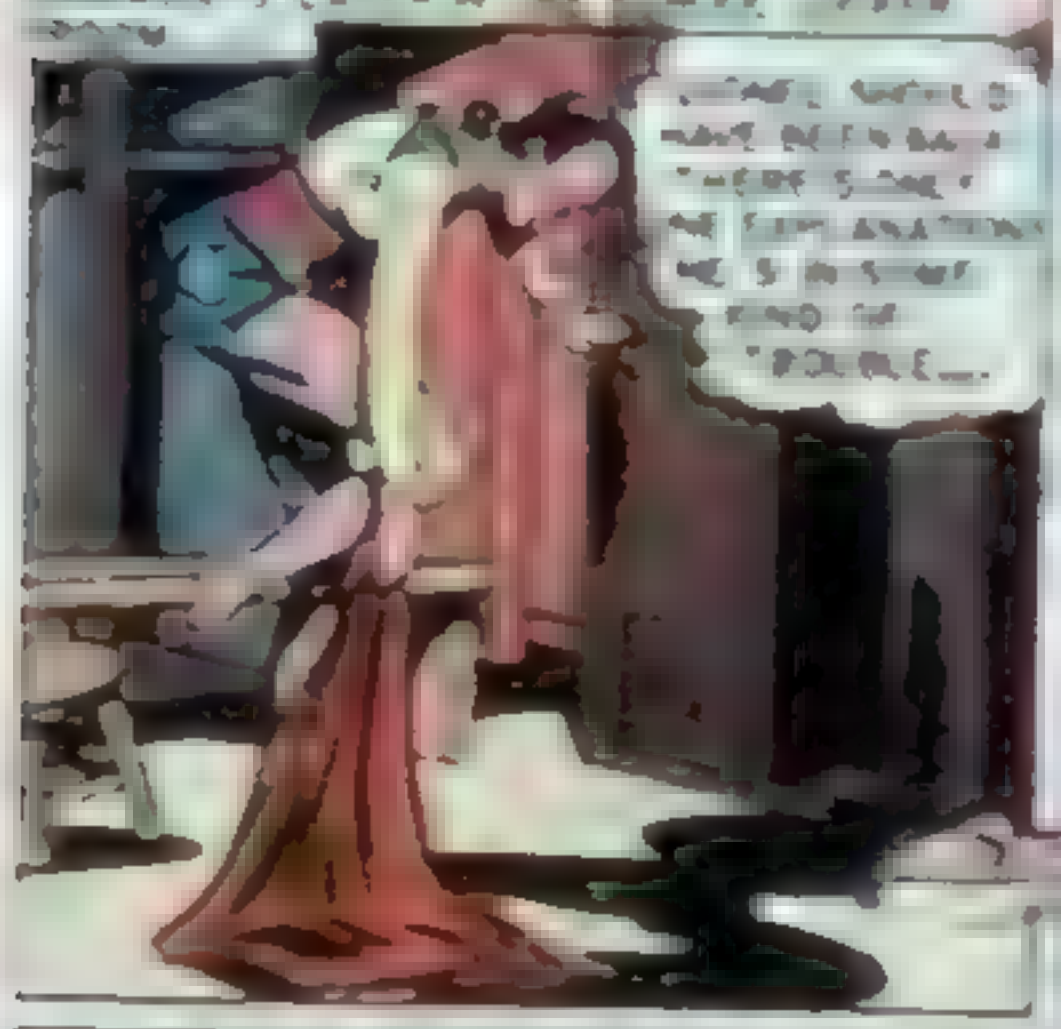

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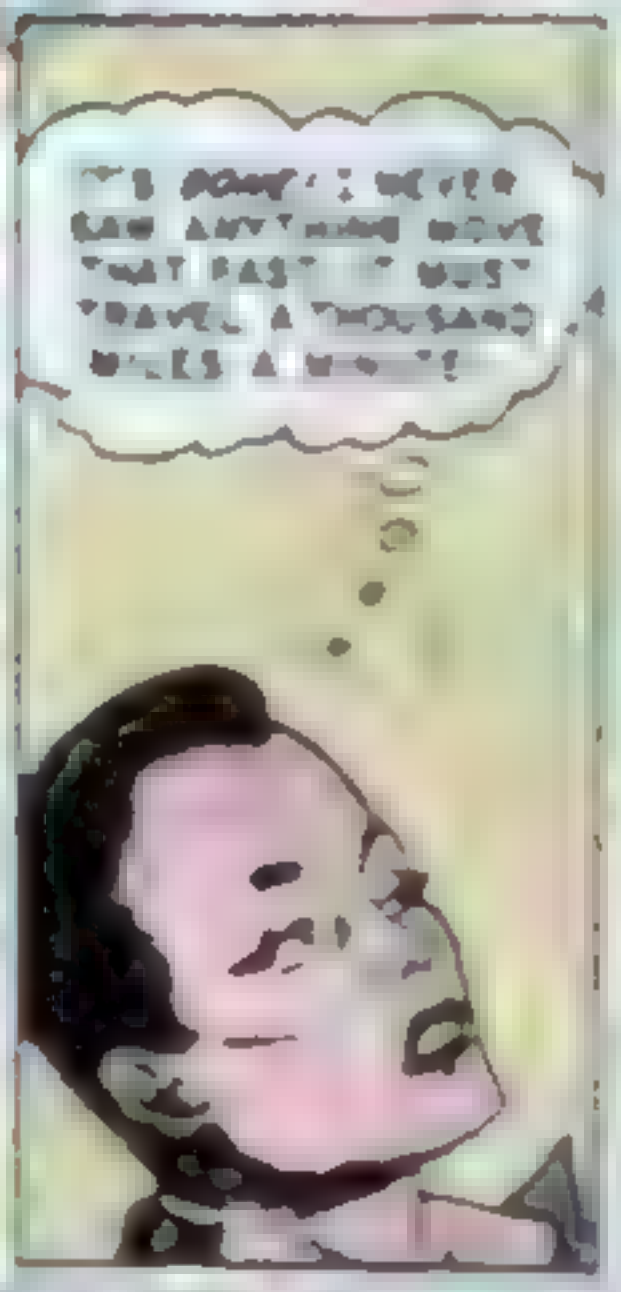
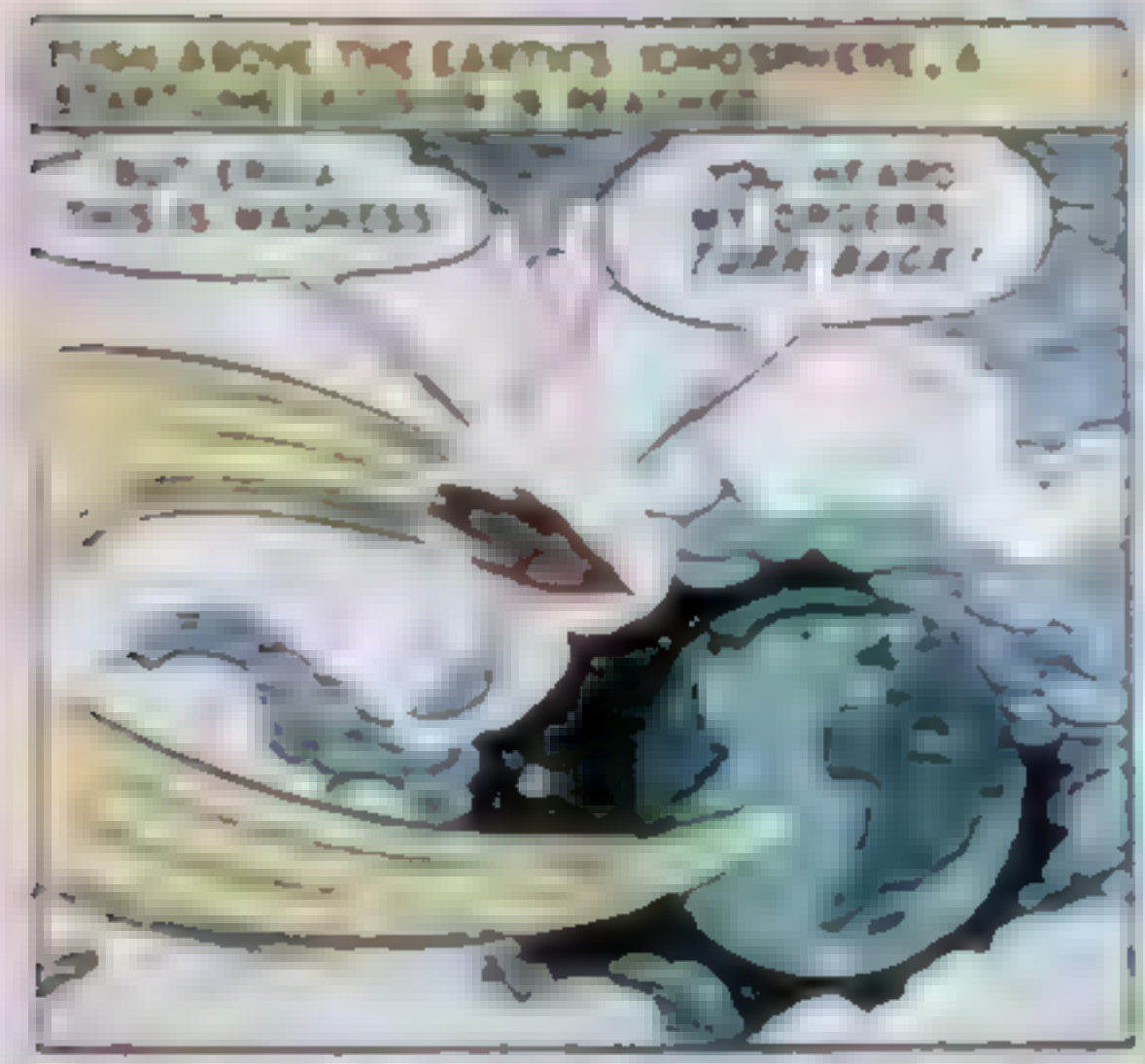
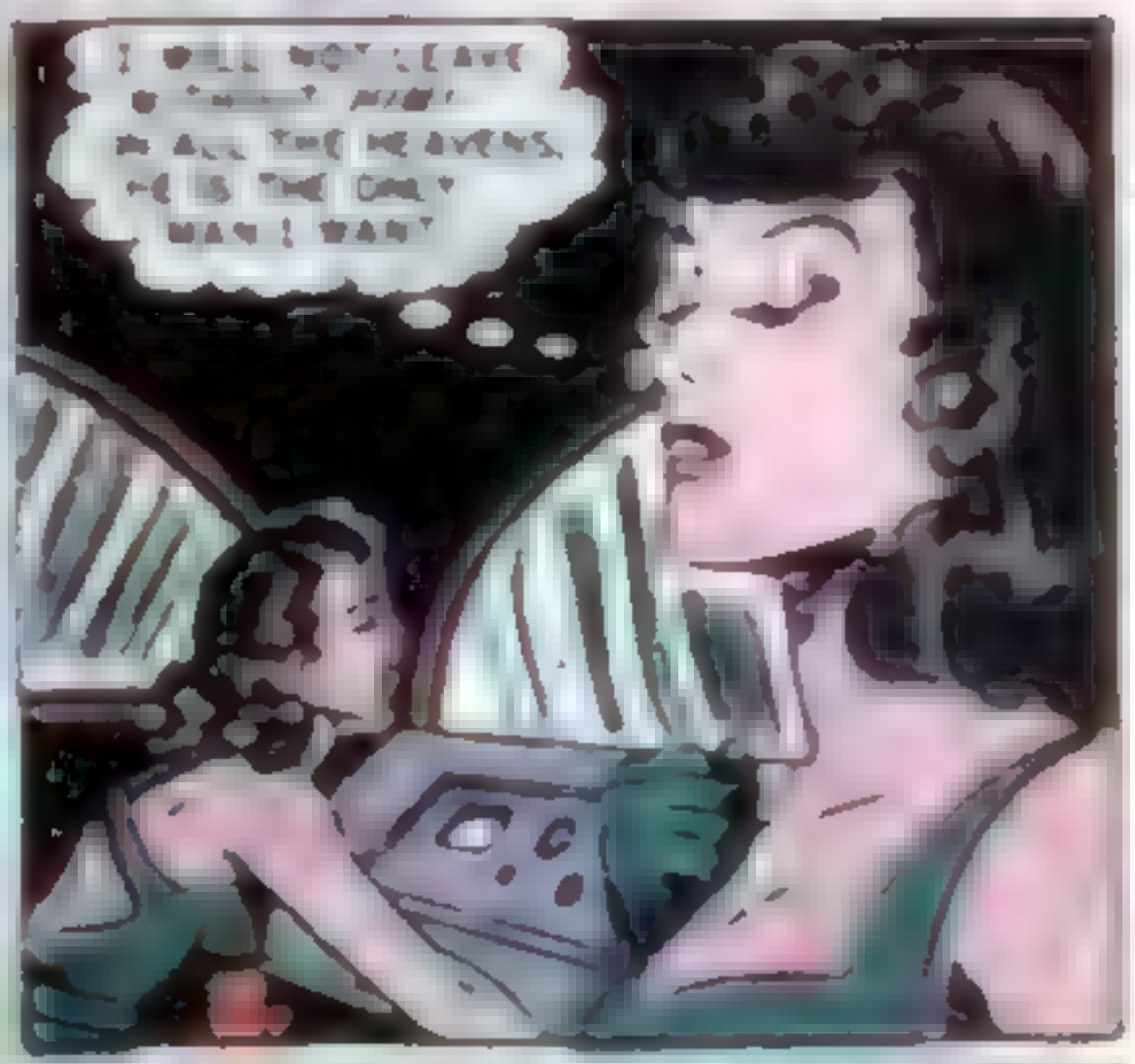


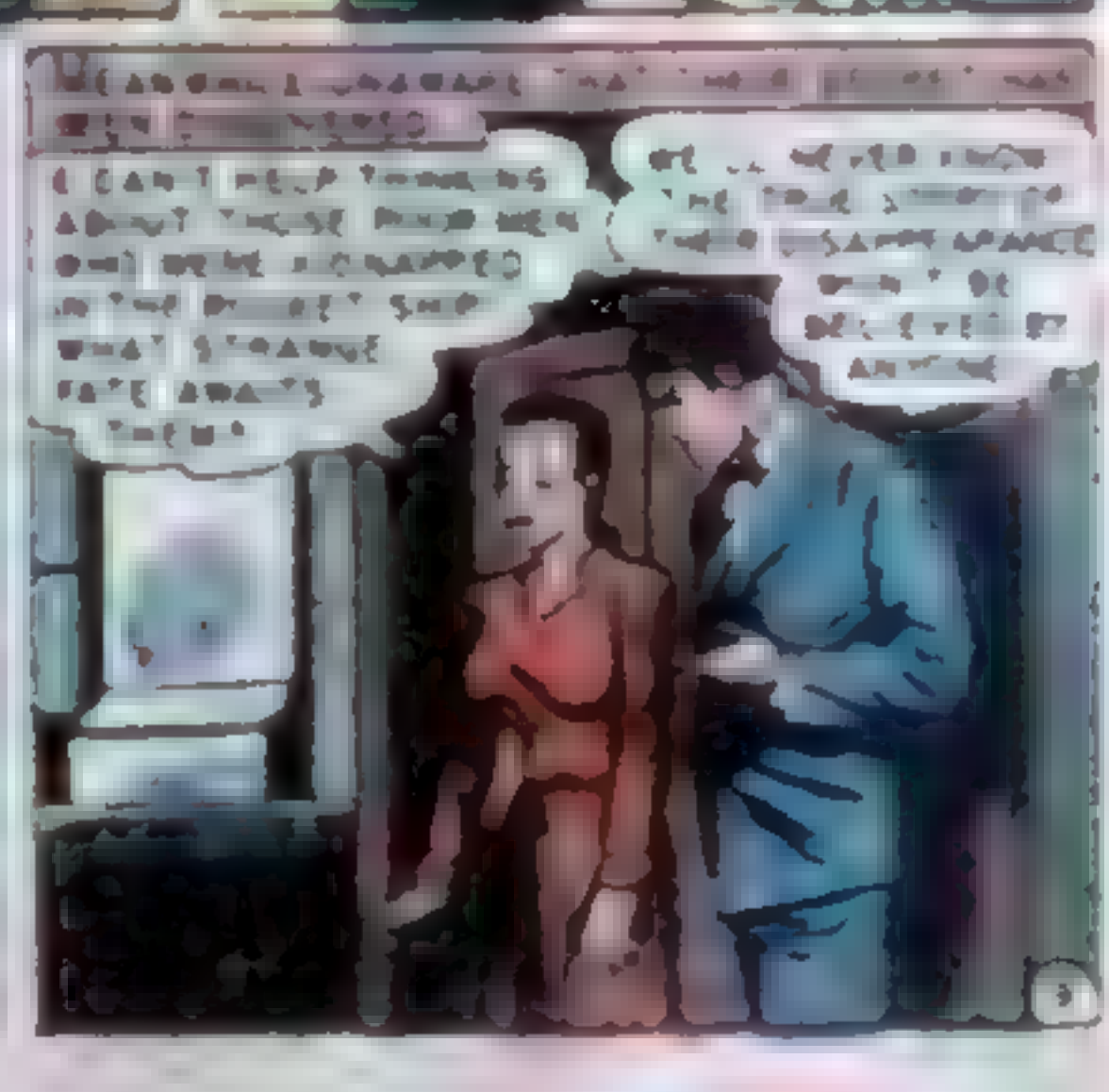
EVERY PASSING SECOND SENDS STRENGTH SURGING BACK INTO THE POWERFUL MIGHTY BODY
I'M ALL RIGHT NOW! I CAN MOVE FREELY
WHAT A TERRIBLE WEAPON THAT SPEED RAY MUST BE
I DID PROTECT IT BY THE MOONSTONE

SUCH A WEAPON CANNOT BE OF THIS EARTH! I CAN'T HELP WONDERING WHERE OUR VISITORS CAME FROM
YES—AND WHETHER WE'LL EVER SEE THEM AGAIN

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE







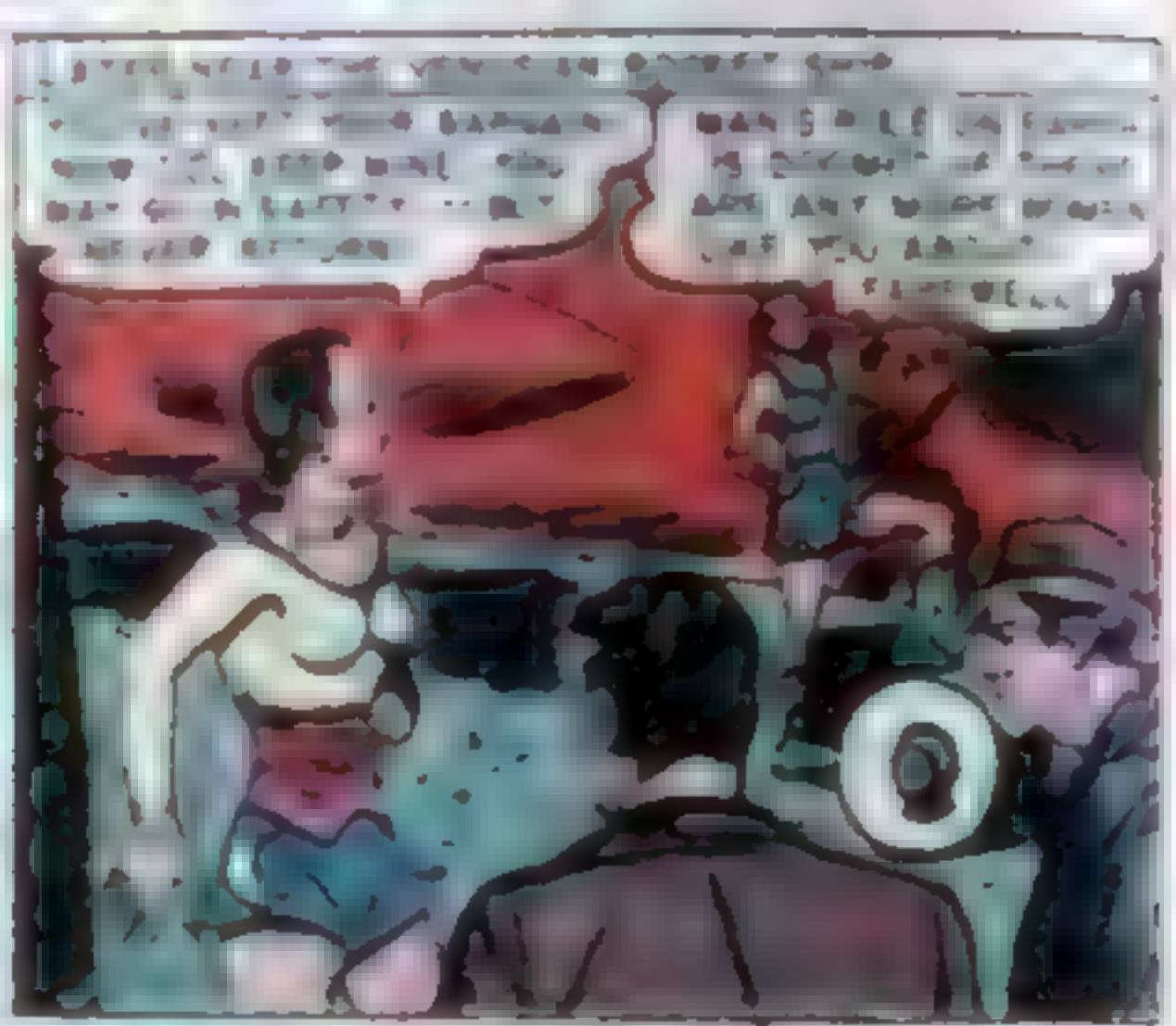
MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

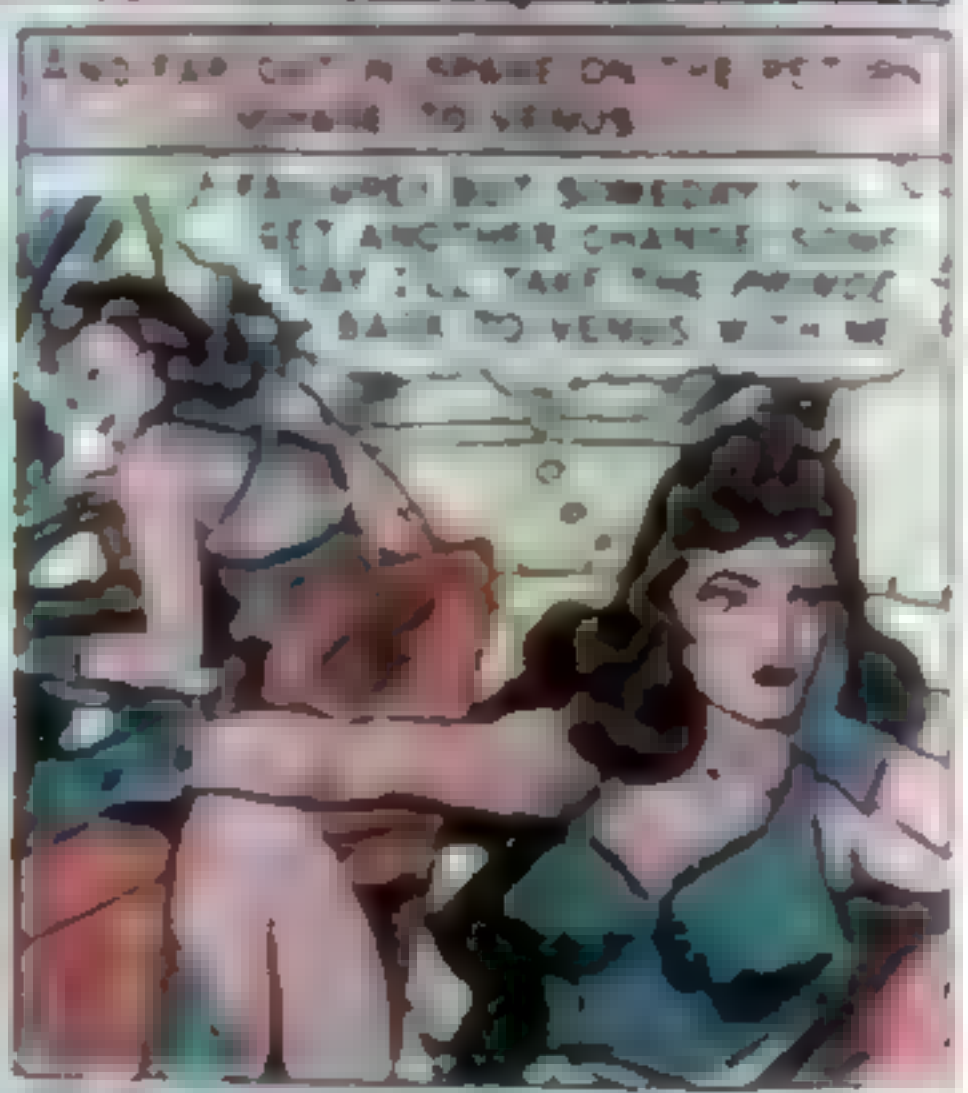
WHAMM!

OOOOF!

LOOK THERE!

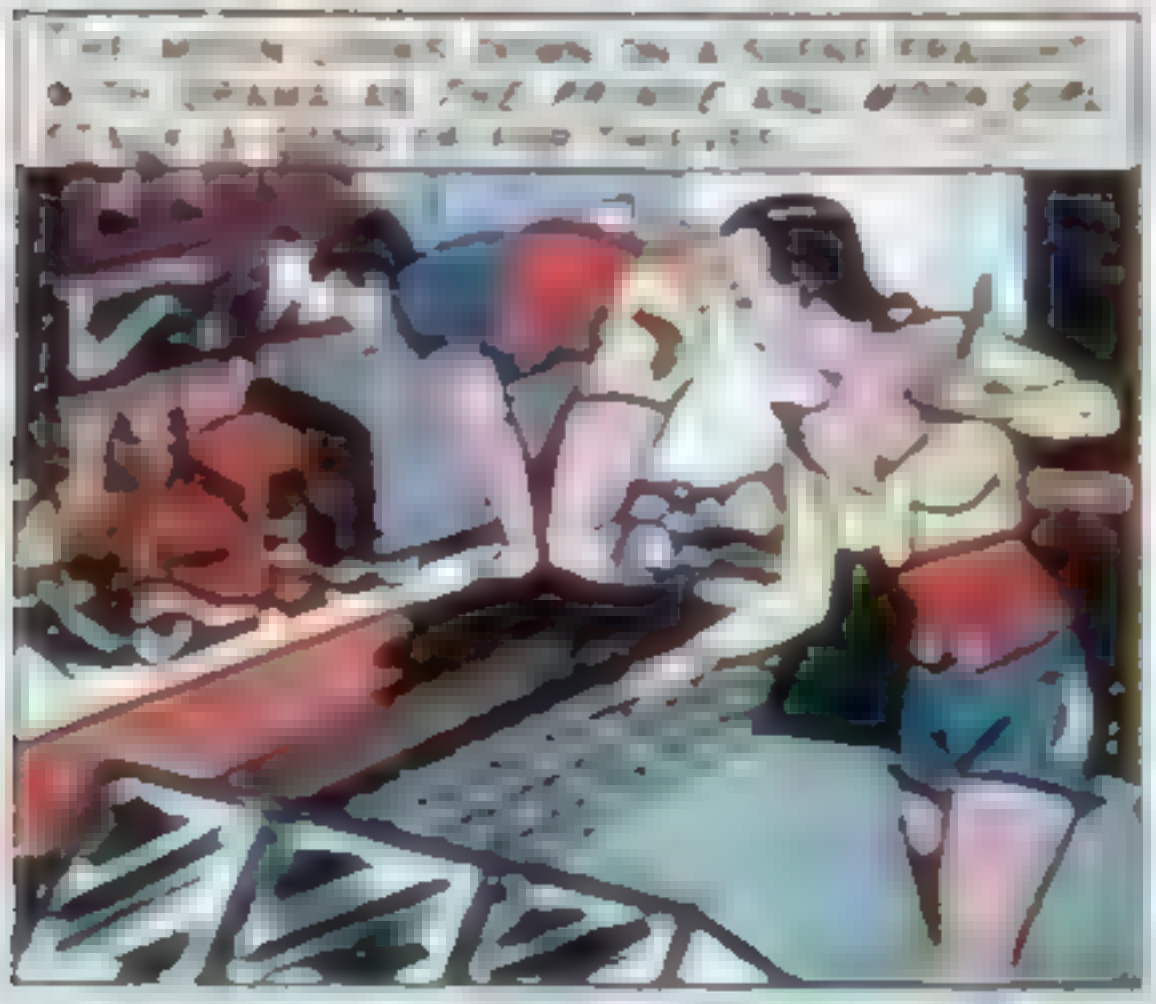
MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

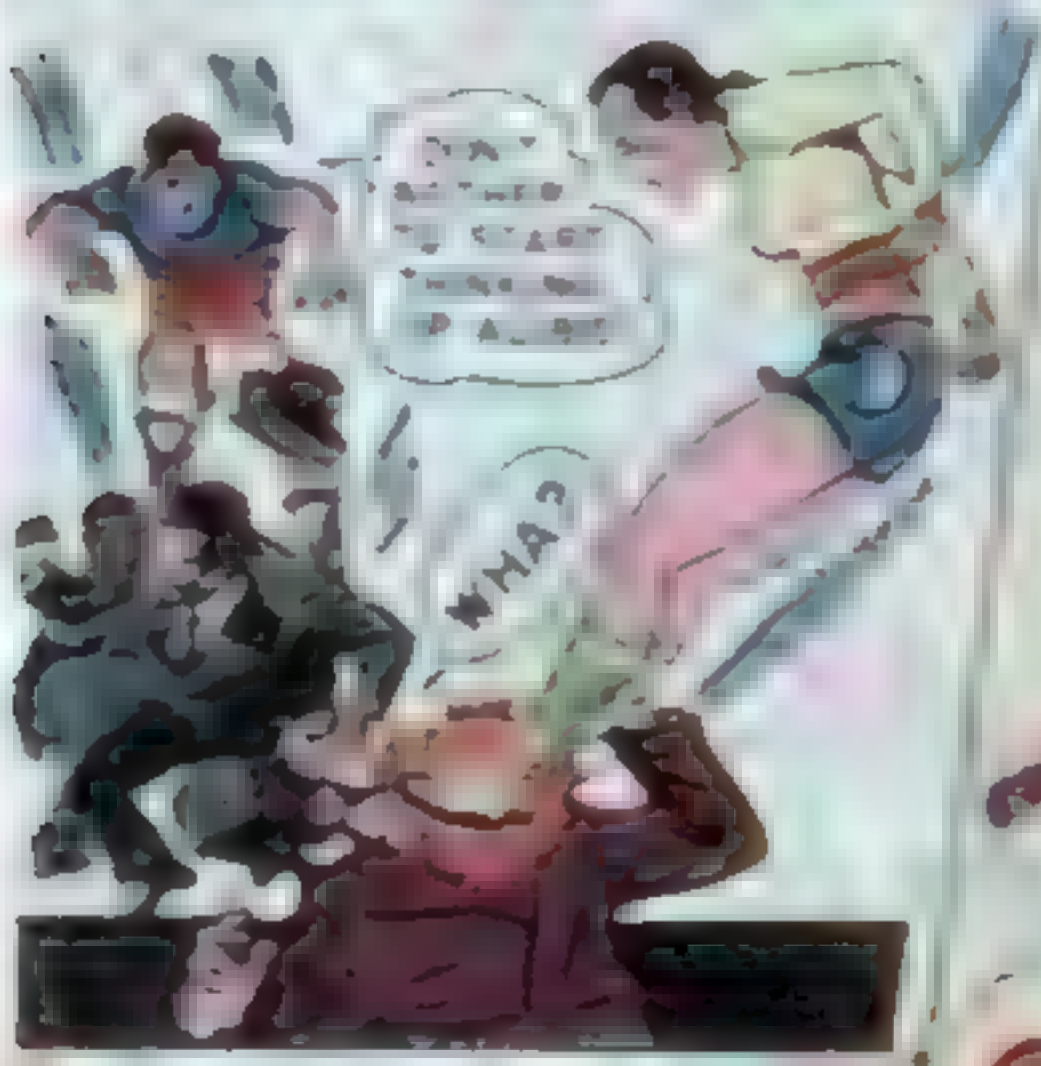


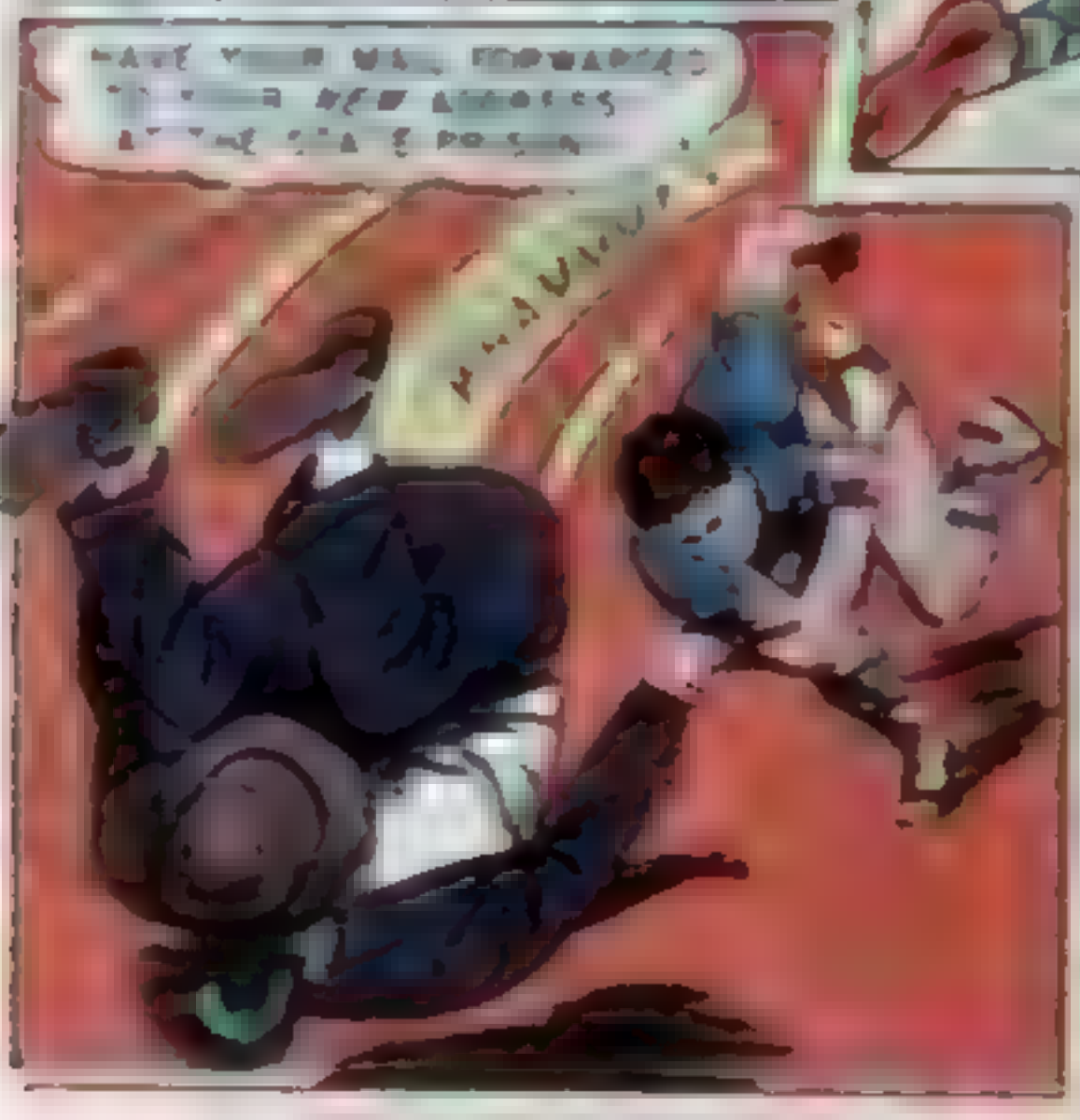


PRINCE MENGU and Moon Girl

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE







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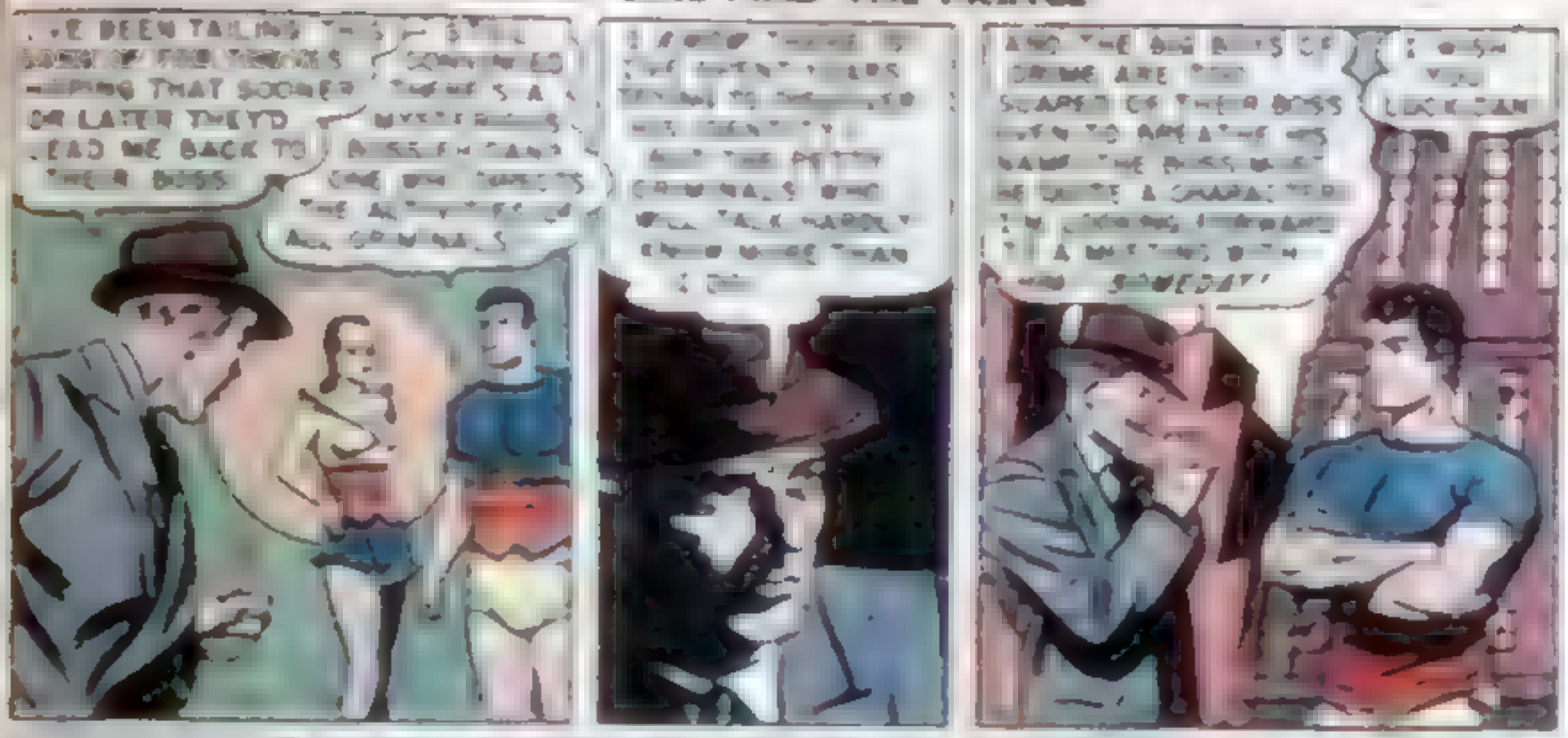
I'VE BEEN TAILING THIS SMALL TIME CROOK FOR WEEKS
HOPING THAT SOONER OR LATER THEY'D LEAD ME BACK TO THEIR BOSS
THERE'S A MYSTERIOUS KINGPIN WHO CONTROLS THE ACTIVITIES OF ALL CRIMINALS
I'VE HEARD THERE IS THIS PETTY CRIMINALS WHO TALK HARDER THAN THEY
AND THE BIG BOSS OF CRIME ARE THE SCRAPES OF THEIR BOSS
I WISH YOU LUCK I CAN
SOMEDAY

LUCK IS A SUPERSTITION EVEN THE PRINCE AND MOON GIRL DON'T NEED IF THEY EVER TANGLED WITH SATANA QUEEN OF THE UNDERWORLD.

I'M NOT AFRAID OF SATANA I DON'T NEED LUCK
I'LL TAKE ANYTHING YOU SAY
A FEW OF MY BOYS WERE TAKEN BY THE PRINCE AND MOON GIRL THAT'S WHY MY TAXI WASN'T SO SHINY THIS MORNING I'D BUY THAT TAXI JESS FOR MY SCRAPS
YES, SATANA ANYTHING YOU SAY

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

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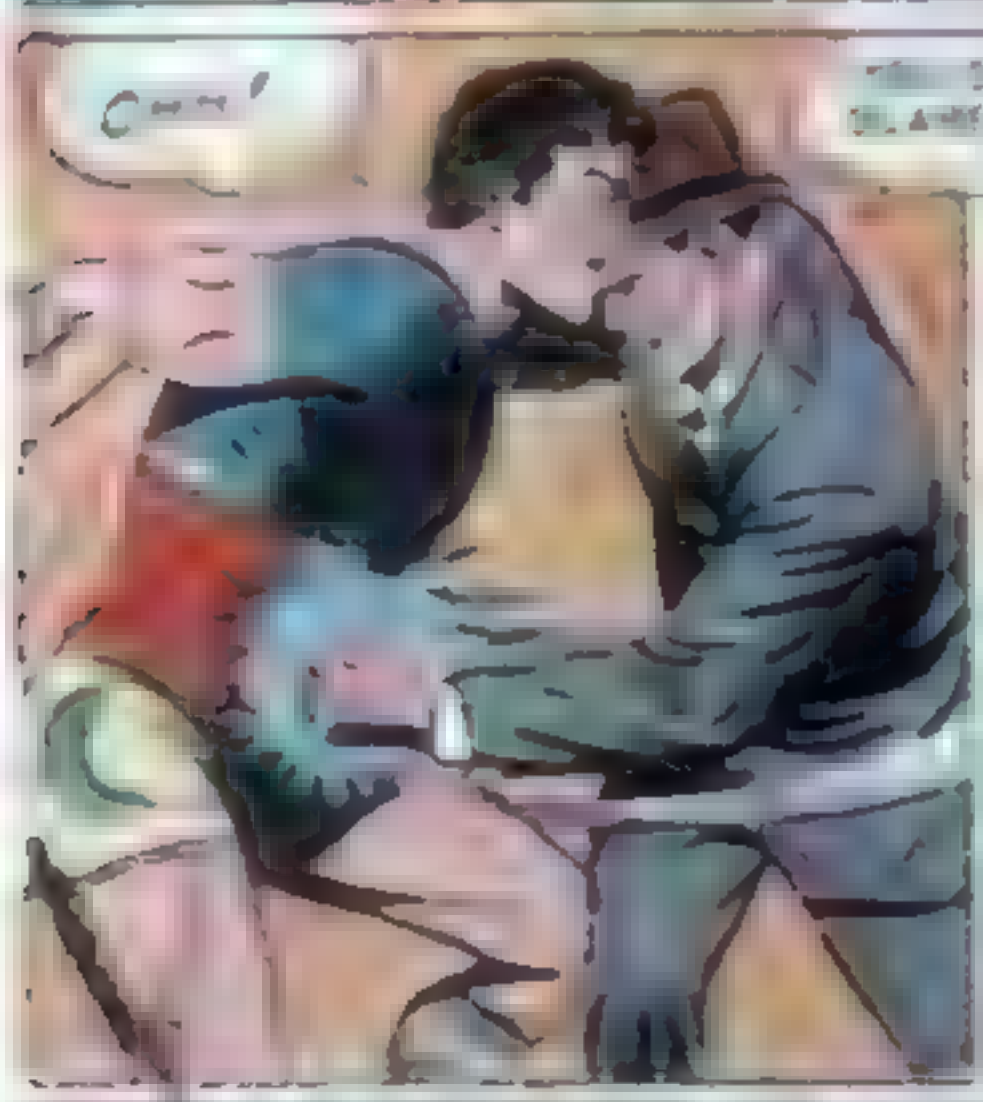


MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

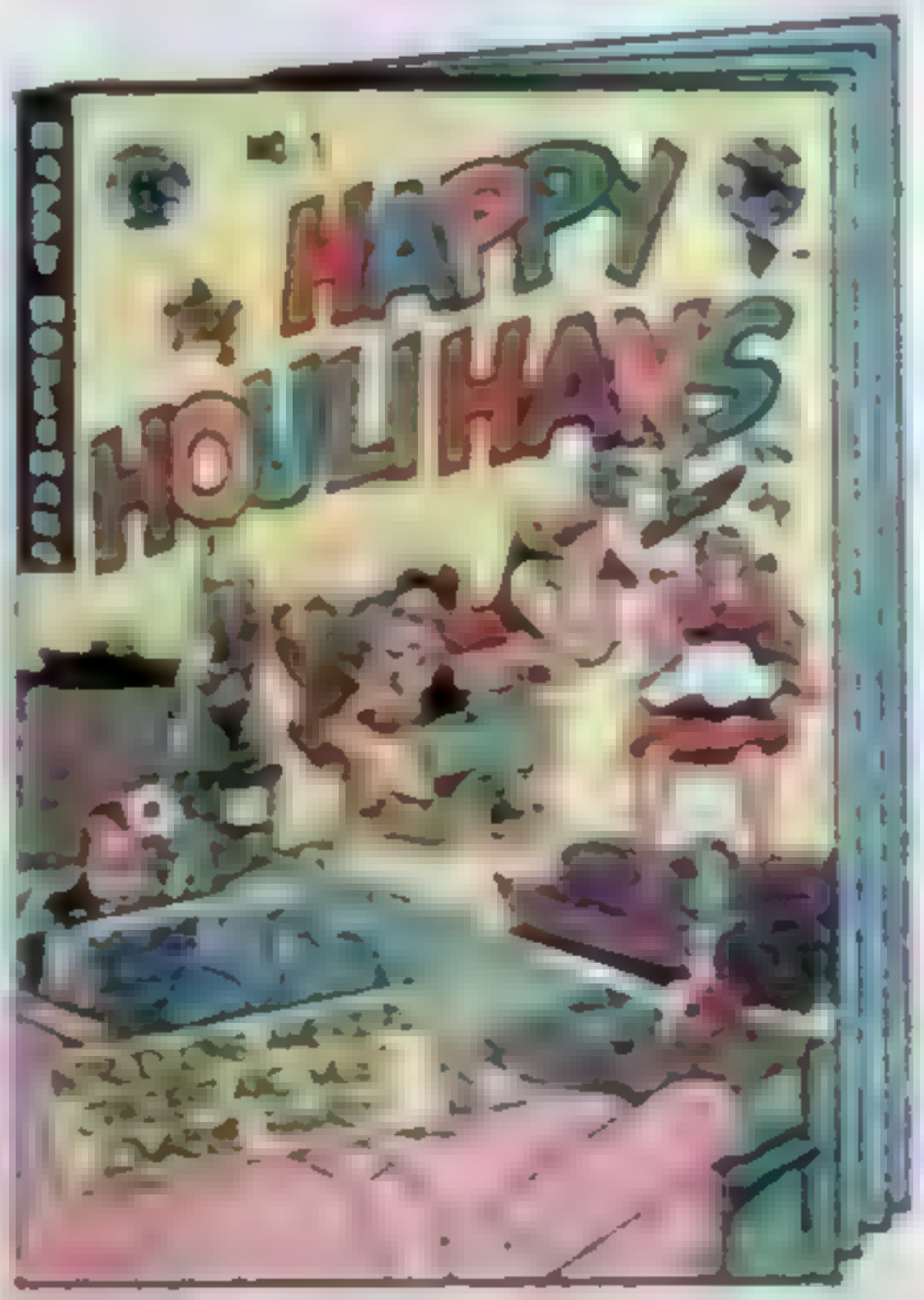
MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

2 NEW MAGAZINES YOU'RE SURE TO FIND DIFFERENT — EXCITING!

FOR A THRILL-A-MINUTE FOLLOW THE AMAZING ADVENTURES OF

BLACKSTONE...

THE MAGICIAN DETECTIVE ...IN HIS ACTION-PACKED *FIGHT AGAINST CRIME!*



FOR THE LAUGH SENSATION OF THIS (OR *ANY*) YEAR! LOOK FOR AMERICA'S CRAZIEST AND MOST LOVABLE FAMILY...

THE HAPPY HOULIHANS!

EC COMICS

NOW ON SALE AT YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND!

THE TOOTHPICK TRAIL

THE TRAMP stood at the entrance to the dining-car his eyes blinking in the glare of the electric lights. It was pitch-black outside and a cold wind roared into the diner when he opened the door to squeeze himself in. Except for a couple of late customers the place was empty.

"Make up yer mind, Mac" the woman behind the counter snapped at him. "Either come in or get out and close that door behind you." It was late and the woman was tired and wished she could close the place for the night.

The tramp shuffled in and sat on one of the leather stools at the far end of the counter.

"I'd like something to eat ... only I ain't got any money on me" he mumbled.

"What ya think this is ... some kinda charity home?" snapped the woman. But without another word she started over toward the kitchen. "Well," she said, over her shoulder, "what the hoss don't know won't hurt him. Here's a plate of stew and a cup of coffee. I'll be finish out I'm gonna throw this stuff away. I'll get fired so eat it in a hurry and get moving along."

The tramp's face reared in a shy grin. With slopping noises he devoured the stew and gulped the coffee. He smacked his lips in obvious appreciation. The tow-haired and the red-haired youngster seated at the other end of the counter glanced over at him from time to time. His enthusiasm attracted the attention of everyone in the diner.

When he had finished, the tramp stood up and pulled a dirty square of a handkerchief from one of his side pockets. A fifty-cent piece covert fluttered to the counter while he was wiping his lips. Every eye in the diner was on it. It was a TWENTY DOLLAR BILL!

"Well ... what do ya know about that?" shouted the woman behind the counter. "A bummy comes in here begging for a free meal ... cause he ain't got anything to buy it with ... and all the time he's got a twenty dollar bill stuck away someplace."

With her eyes ablaze she viciously snapped up the bill. Before the tramp could mutter a word she walked to the cash register and rang up forty cents.

"Here ya are, wise guy" she hissed, handing him his change. "Nineteen dollars and sixty cents ... and it's probably a lot more than the rest of us here have. But remember this ... you ever show your face around here again and I'll call the cops so fast it'll make yer head swim."

The tramp's lips trembled. He was a tall, lanky man, and his beard was black and scraggly. His eyes were deep and cavernous, and they added to his ghostlike appearance. He was bent over in a marked stoop. His fingers shook as he reached for his change.

The red-headed youngster, concentrating on his doughnut down at the other end of the counter, wondered whether or not that stoop was the real goods or not. There was no way of being sure. This guy was a good actor ... clever ... you had to hand it to him if this was all an act. Just how clever he was ... or if this was an act at all ... Fred Hill had no way of telling as he scratched his mop of red hair and watched the tramp with mounting interest.

"Please don't do that, lady" the tramp was saying. "Don't go and call in no Police, will you? I'll get out and won't bother you again, honest. This here money ... it's all I got in the world. I gotta have it for a railroad ticket to my son's place in Los Angeles. It's the only place left I can go to."

He removed his grimy, shapeless old hat and bowed sheepishly in the direction of the woman, who gave him a sharp glance. She began to wipe the counter with short, angry strokes. The tramp waited for a moment for some response from her, and finally pulled open the door, and stepped out into the biting, howling night.

A MINUTE OR SO later while Fred Hill was glancing over his newspaper, he heard a choked gasp from the other side of the counter. The counter-girl leaned weakly against the drawer of the cash register. She had a bill in her hand, and was holding it up to the light to examine it closely.

"What's the trouble?" asked Fred, starting forward. "Someone try to pass a bad bill off on you?"

"That ... that tramp" the woman moaned. "I knew there was something phoney about him. That twenty dollar bill he passed me ... it's no good."

Fred's red eyebrows knitted in a frown.

"What are you going to do about it?" he asked.

The woman was already standing at the dial telephone on the wall. "I'm gonna call the police and make a charge against that tramp!" she shouted. "He swiped nineteen dollars and

...ary make him out. I'll have to make it up from my own pocket or the cash register's gonna be that much short."

Young Fred's eyes were thoughtful. He was trying to remember something that his friend, Special Agent Mel Harris of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, had told him only the night before. Something about passing counterfeit money. Quickly Fred buttoned up his heavy overcoat and pulled his hat down to protect his ears against the cold night which he remembered what it was that his friend had told him.

"Good idea to call the police right away" Fred said to the woman. "But I'm afraid that you have no legal charge against him. You see he didn't actually pass the money! He returned it in a very clever trick — he dropped it, making it look accidental. And you were so angry that you grabbed the bill without bothering to look at it and gave him $1.50 in good American money. Which was exactly what he was counting on — the fact that you were going to lose your temper."

"But — but —" the woman stuttered. "It was not the same as if he handed it to me."

"Well I hope the police are able to pick up that tramp" said Fred. "There's a lot of a pretty shrewd counterfeiting outfit operating in the area the past few weeks. The fellow who was in here just now may be a stool — or he may be one of the members of the gang."

With these words Fred decided to follow the tramp. He might be a small time crook — but then again, he might be a member of the counterfeit ring which the FBI had so far unsuccessfully battled. And any one was worth nabbing down according to Fred's friend, Special Agent Mel Harris.

Fred stepped into the telephone booth and quickly dialed a number. Mel's voice at the other end was as calm and reassuring as ever. After Fred had recounted the episode he gave Mel the diner's address.

"I'm going to try to get that bum" Fred said. "I don't know yet what this is going to lead me into — if anything. Follow me if you can. I'll leave a trail of toothpicks for you to spot — look out for them."

Little wooden toothpicks would be out of the ordinary. They could be easily carried and spotted by a man who was looking for them with a searchlight. Mel should have no trouble in following the toothpick trail — no trouble in finding him. If there was anything left to find at the end of the trail. The Hot Money Gang had plenty of violence to its credit already.

He scooped up a handful of little wooden toothpicks and stuffed them into his overcoat pocket. He laid the money for his check on the counter and closed the door of the diner behind him. It was considerably colder now than it had been, and the wind was roaring with increased ferocity. Fred had to lean into it in order to maintain his balance, as he started down the deserted road. A dim, stooped figure was barely visible several hundred feet in front of him. Fred quickened his steps so that he would not lose the man in the darkness. As he walked along he became aware that the bum had glanced back several times, as he cautiously stepped off the road. The moaning of the wind covered the cracking sounds he made as he followed the road by darting from tree to tree. And every few steps that he took Fred tossed a thin wooden toothpick onto the road so that his friend Mel would follow him.

SUDDENLY HE HEARD voices ahead of him in the darkness. He recognized the high pitched whine of the tramp from the diner. He moved in a little closer. A car was parked in a narrow clearing and four men were talking beside the car, speaking to the thin tramp.

"It worked without a hitch" the hobo was saying. "Bamboozled a twenty!"

"Great" a second voice cut in. "Bill and me each got rid of some loot and we unloaded a fifty. We're on top of the world now, after working the racket in this town for a couple weeks. I'll bet Lone thought that we showed off before the coppers began to catch wise. Tomorrow morning we'll — wait. What was that?"

The sound of a twig cracking in the underbrush had made a noise like a pistol shot. Fred crouched breathlessly and waited in the agony to edge closer to the car. He had stepped on some brittle branches.

The car door swung open, and Fred could hear the furious sound of running feet. Flashlights swung hideously over the entire area, just inches away from the spot in which he crouched. He could see the glint of gunmetal.

"I see him!" a deep voice rang out. "He's over there — in those bushes!"

"Get him here!" the shrill voice of the hobo cried out.

At the grim words that spelled his doom, Fred felt a chill run down his spine. What would Mel find at the end of the toothpick trail?

WILL FRED ESCAPE FROM THE COUNTERFEIT CROOKS? READ THE NEXT ISSUE OF *MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE!*

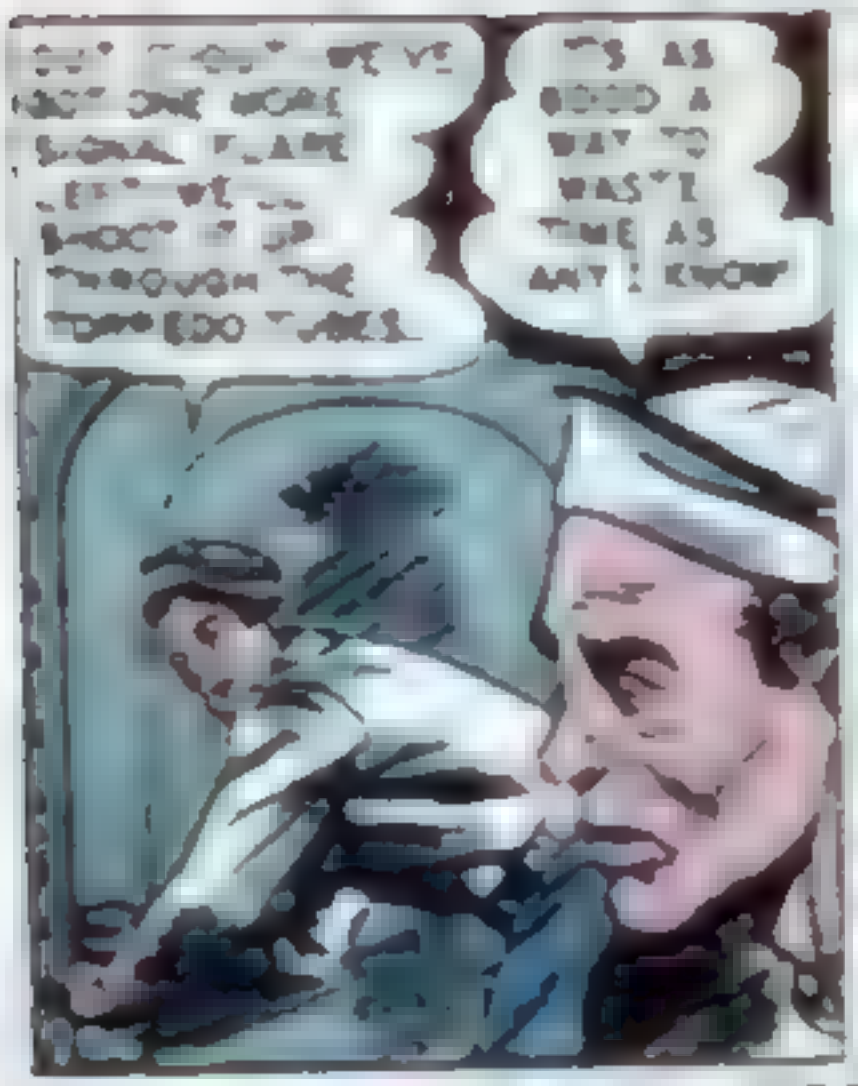
MOON GIRL

SMUGGLER'S COVE!

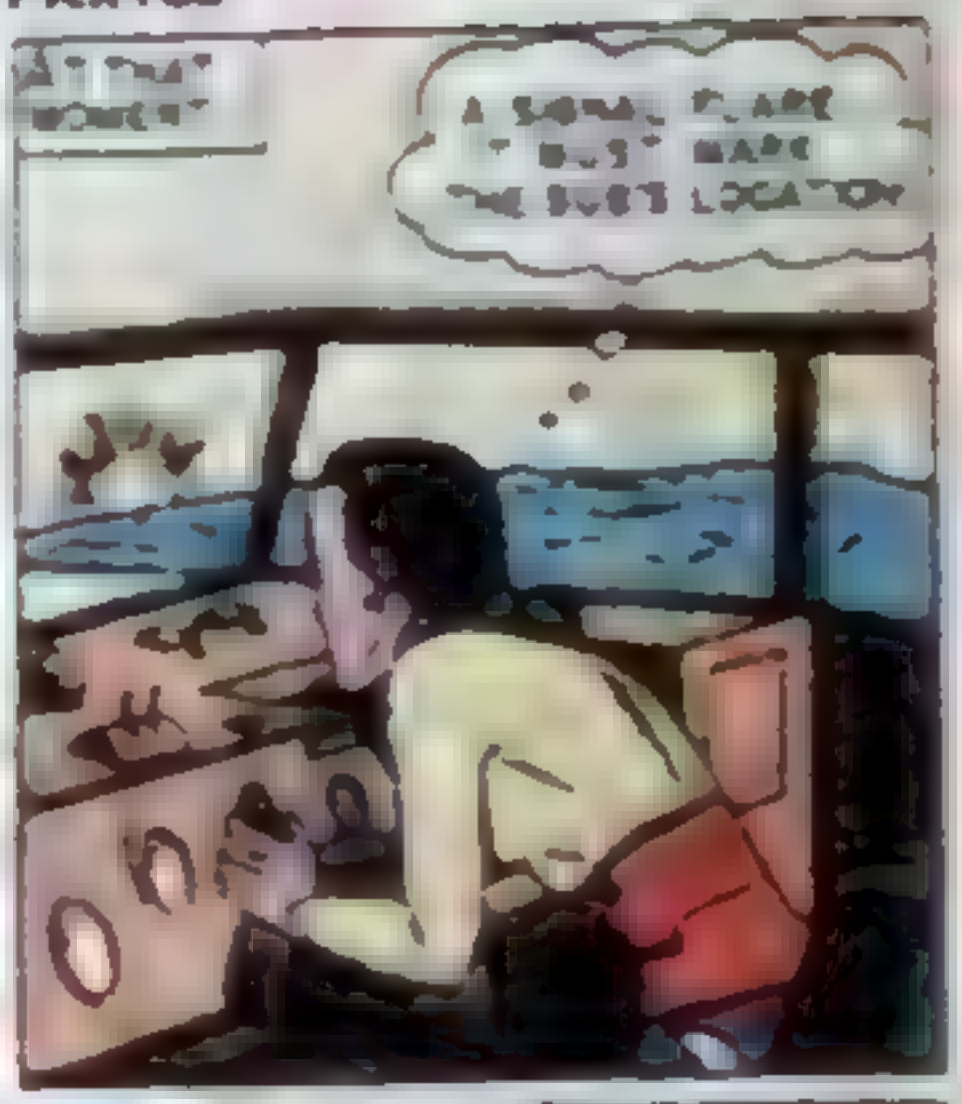
KA-BOOM!

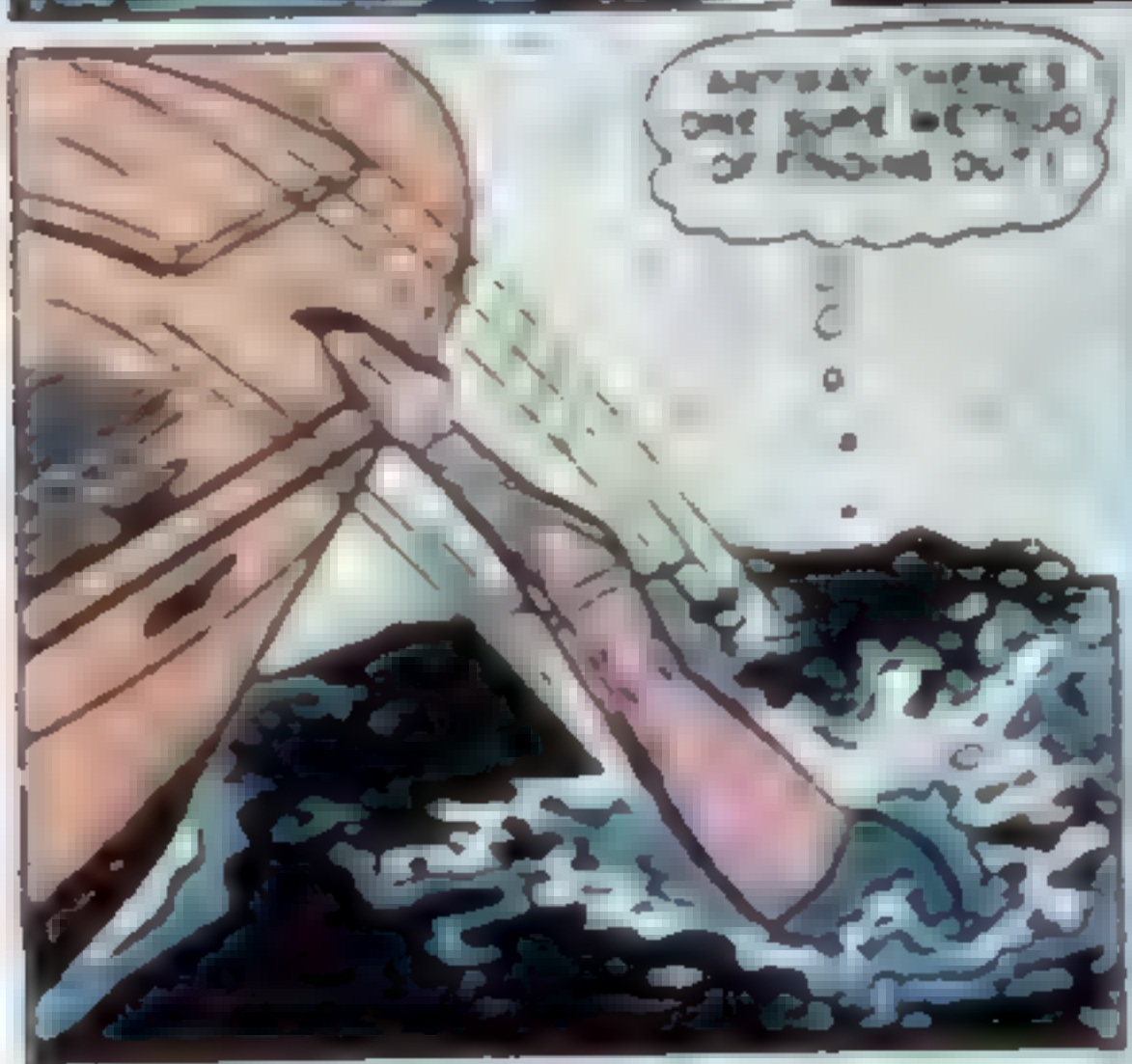
MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

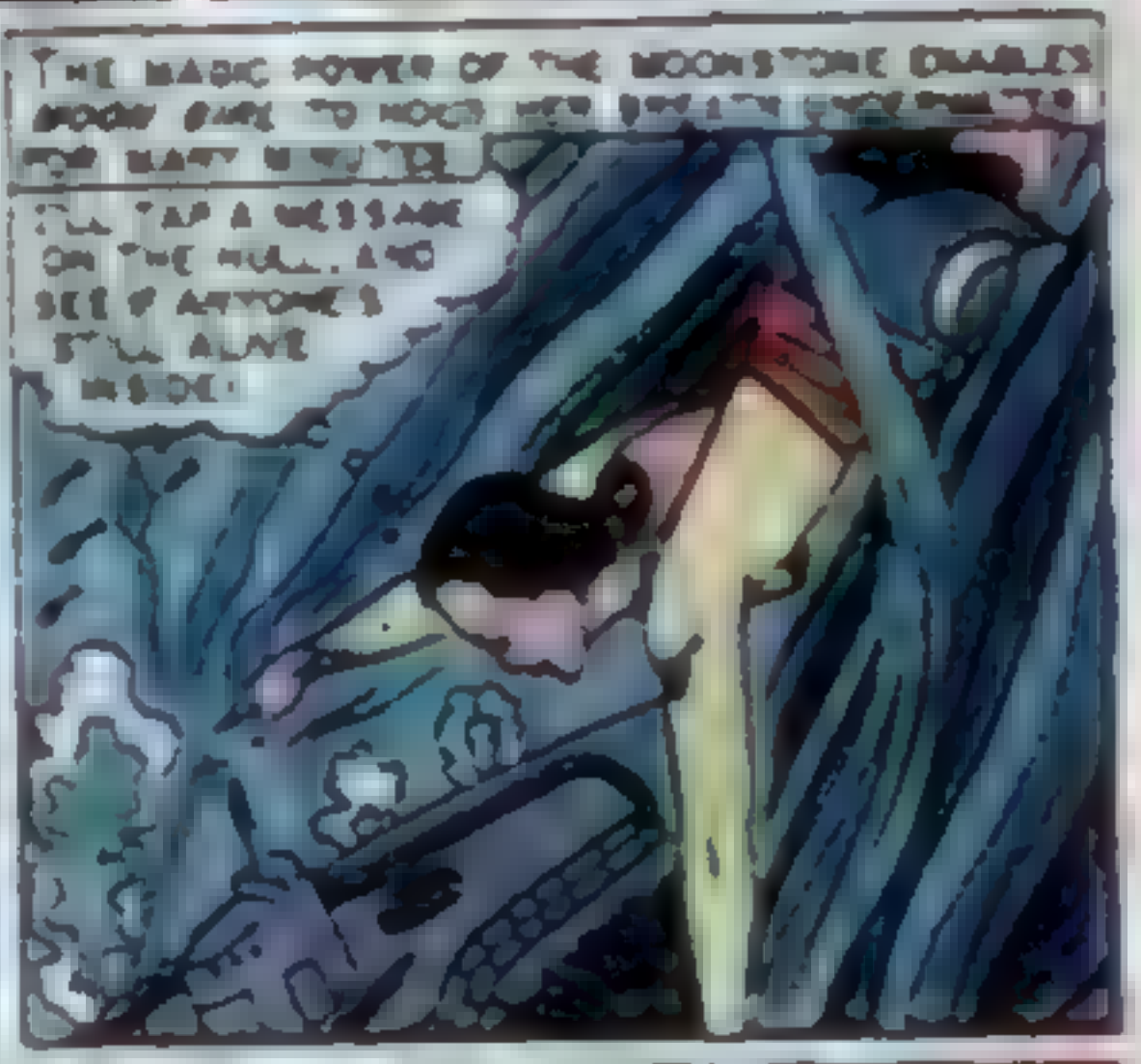
MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

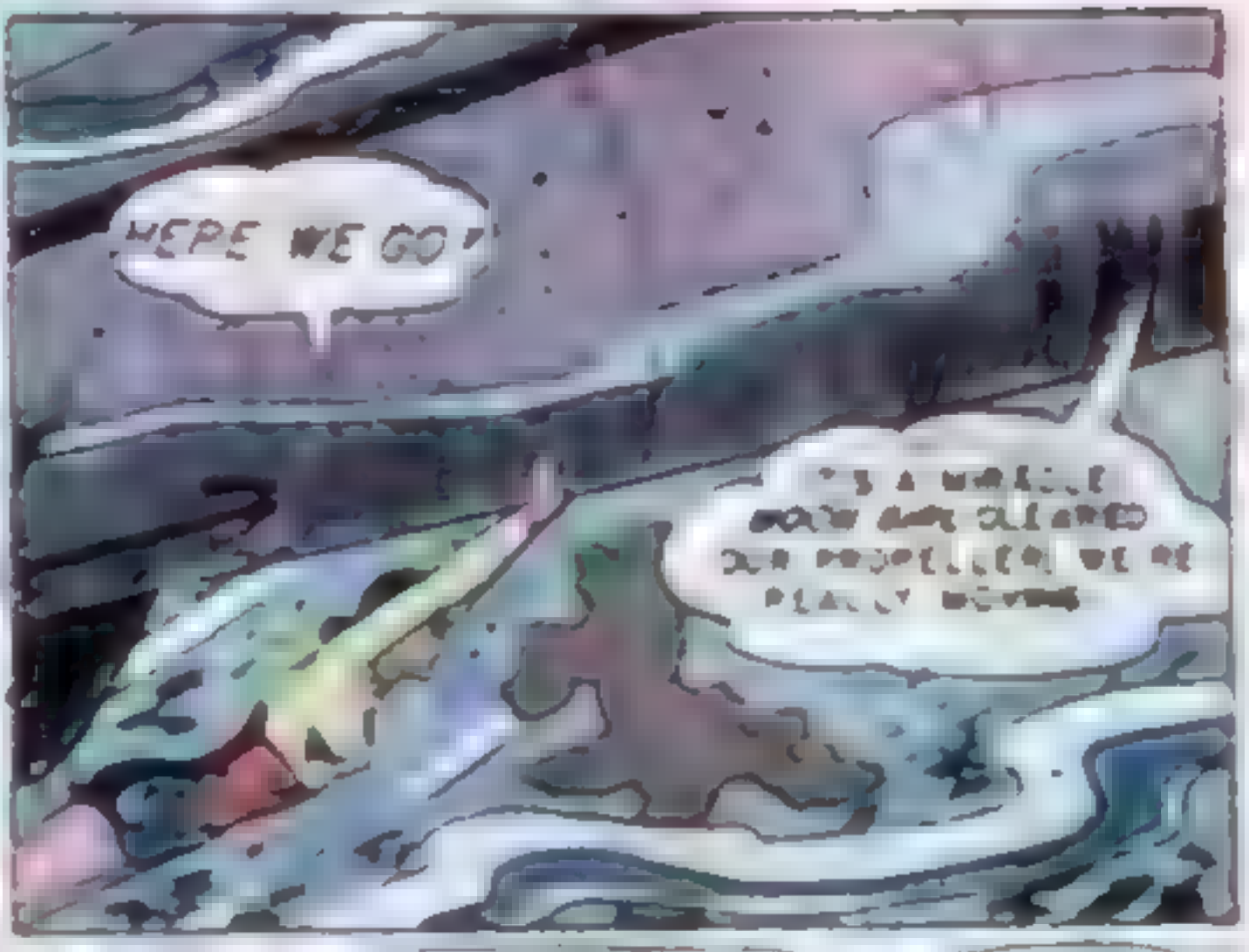


IN A "TRANSPARENT" WATERPROOF SHELL, THE SIGNAL FLARE SHOOTS TO THE SURFACE WHERE THE SPECIAL "TREATED" COATING DISSOLVES IN THE AIR, AND THE FLARE BURNS BRIGHTLY.

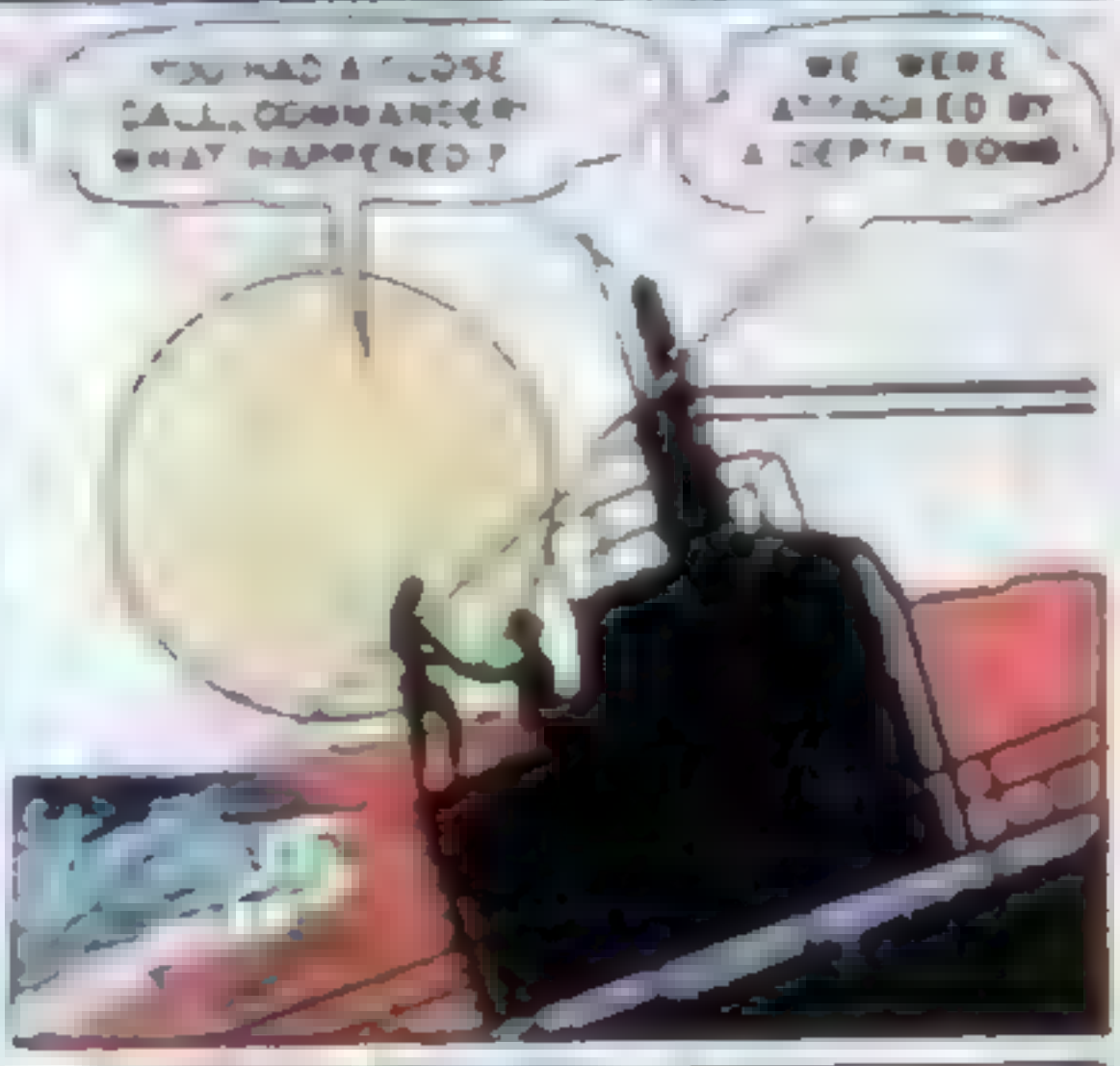


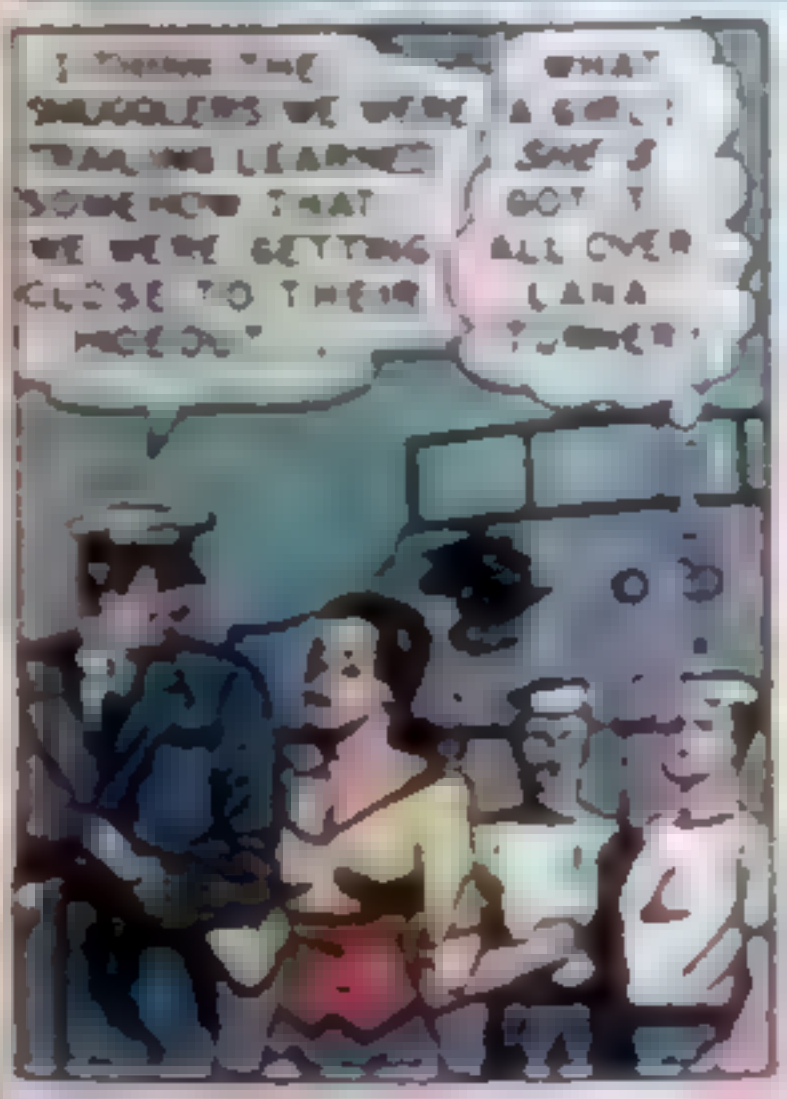



THE MAGIC POWER OF THE MOONSTONE ENABLES MOON GIRL TO HOOK HER BATTLE-STAFF TO THE HULL OF ANY VESSEL.
I'LL TAP A MESSAGE ON THE HULL, AND SEE IF ANYONE'S STILL ALIVE INSIDE!

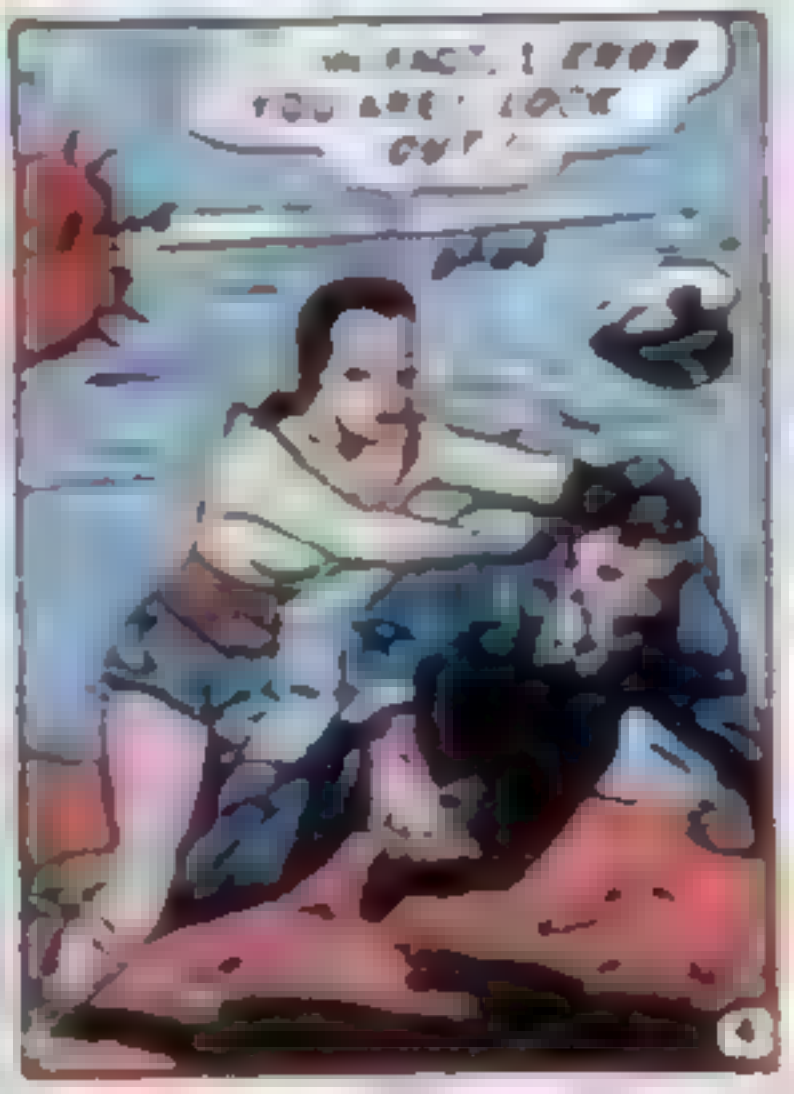

HERE WE GO!

THIS LOOKS LIKE A GOOD SPOT TO BEACH THE SUB FOR WHATEVER REPAIRS ARE NEEDED! BUT FIRST I'LL GET THE CREW OUT

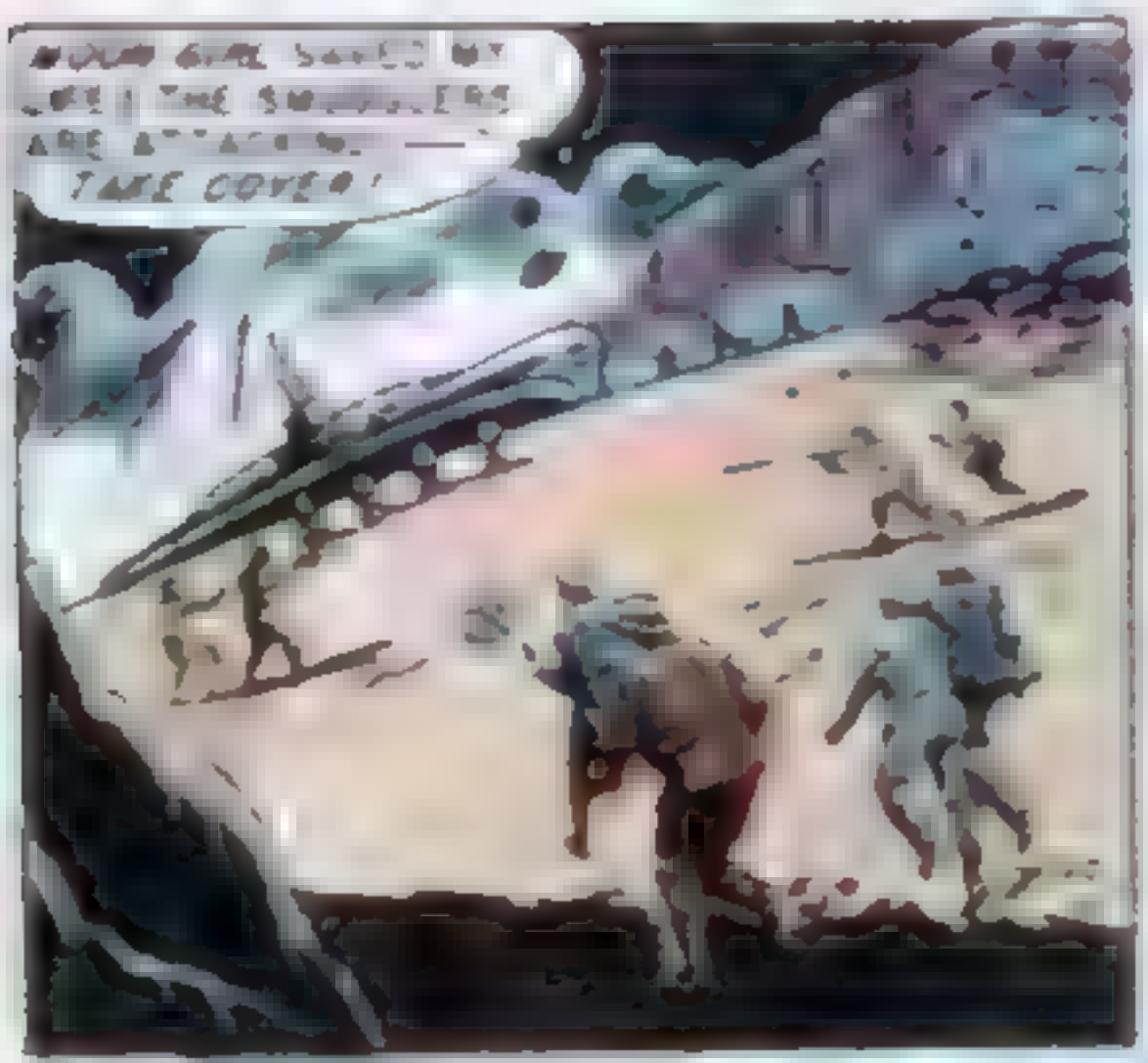

YOU HAD A CLOSE CALL. COMMANDER! WHAT HAPPENED?
WE WERE ATTACKED BY A DEPTH BOMB

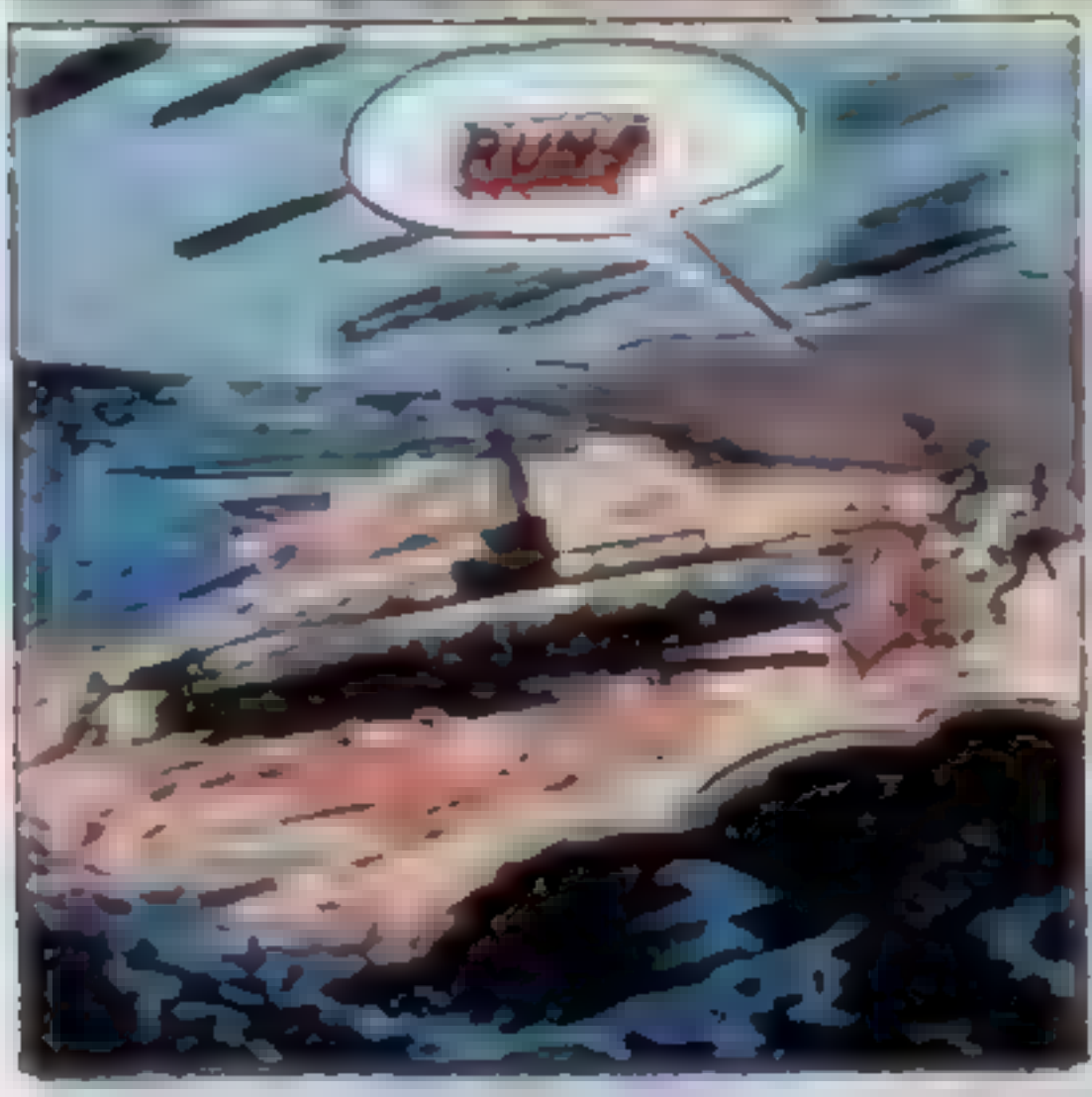

I THINK THE SMUGGLERS WE'VE TRAILING LEARNED SOMEHOW THAT WE'VE BEEN GETTING CLOSE TO THEIR HIDEOUT
WHAT A GIRL! SHE'S GOT IT ALL OVER LANA TURNER!

THIS MUST BE THE SMUGGLERS BASE! I BELIEVE YOU ARE RIGHT!


IN FACT, I KNOW YOU ARE! LOOK OUT!

MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE





MOON GIRL AND THE PRINCE

LATER, WHEN THE GANG OF SMUGGLERS HAS BEEN TAKEN CAPTIVE...
THERE'S THE HIDEOUT! ENOUGH CONTRABAND STORED HERE TO FILL A DOZEN WAREHOUSES!

BUT IT'LL NEVER GET INTO OUR COUNTRY NOW! THANKS TO YOU! MOON GIRL!
I ENJOYED EVERY MINUTE OF IT, COMMANDER! AND UH, GIVE MY REGARDS TO YOUR DAUGHTER TOO, WILL YOU?

NEXT DAY, IN THE RAWLEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL...
...AND MY FATHER SAYS MOON GIRL IS ENTITLED TO A BIG REWARD! ONLY NOBODY KNOWS WHERE TO FIND HER!
THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT KINDS OF REWARDS, ELLA MAE!

ANOTHER THRILLING AND EXCITING ADVENTURE OF...

MOON GIRL and The Prince

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International Comics
THE INTERNATIONAL CRIME PATROL
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